No. 2828
Vol. CCXVIII.

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THE SKETCH
FEBRUARY 25, 1953

The Sketch

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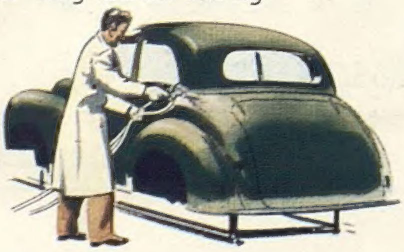

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CC.76(52)

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and WHITE—cross-etching a falcon-grey suede.
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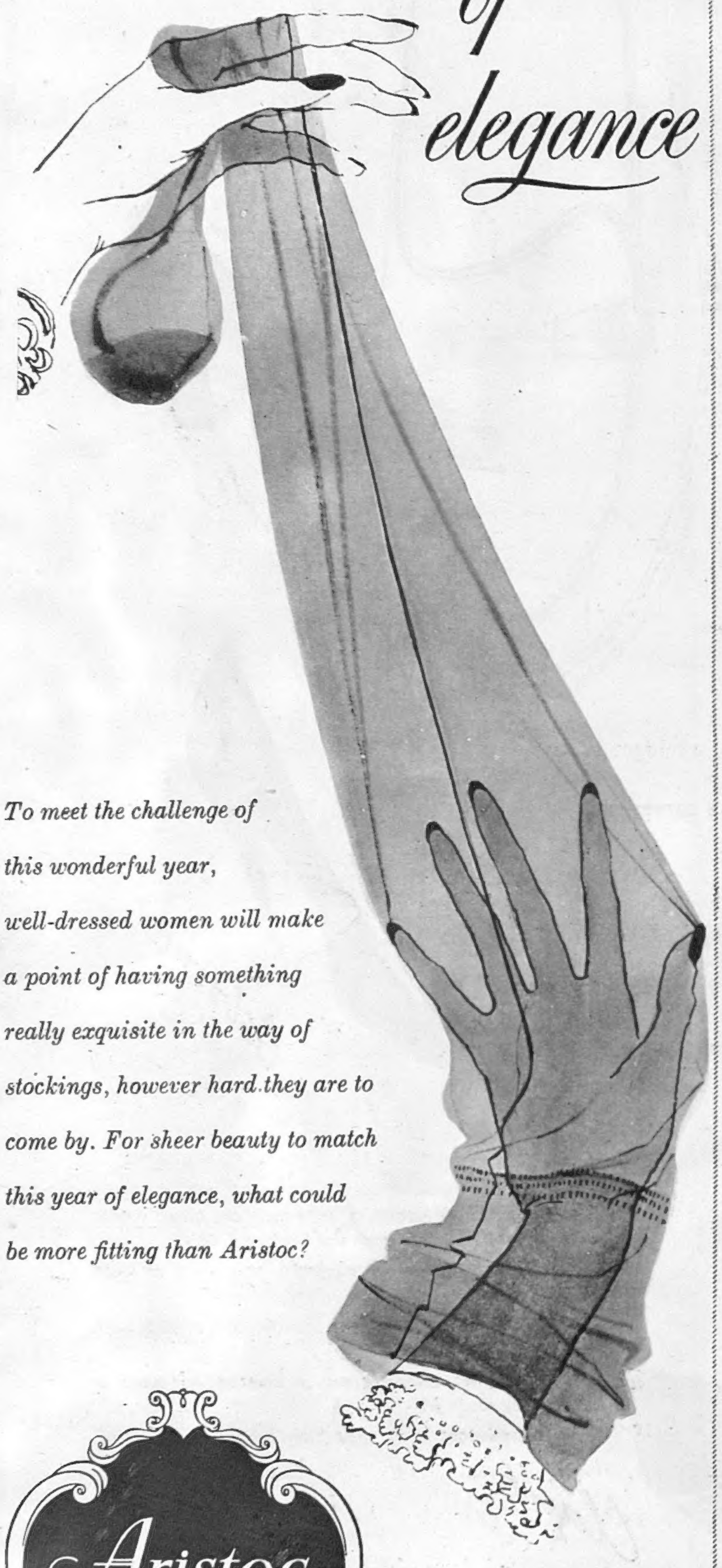

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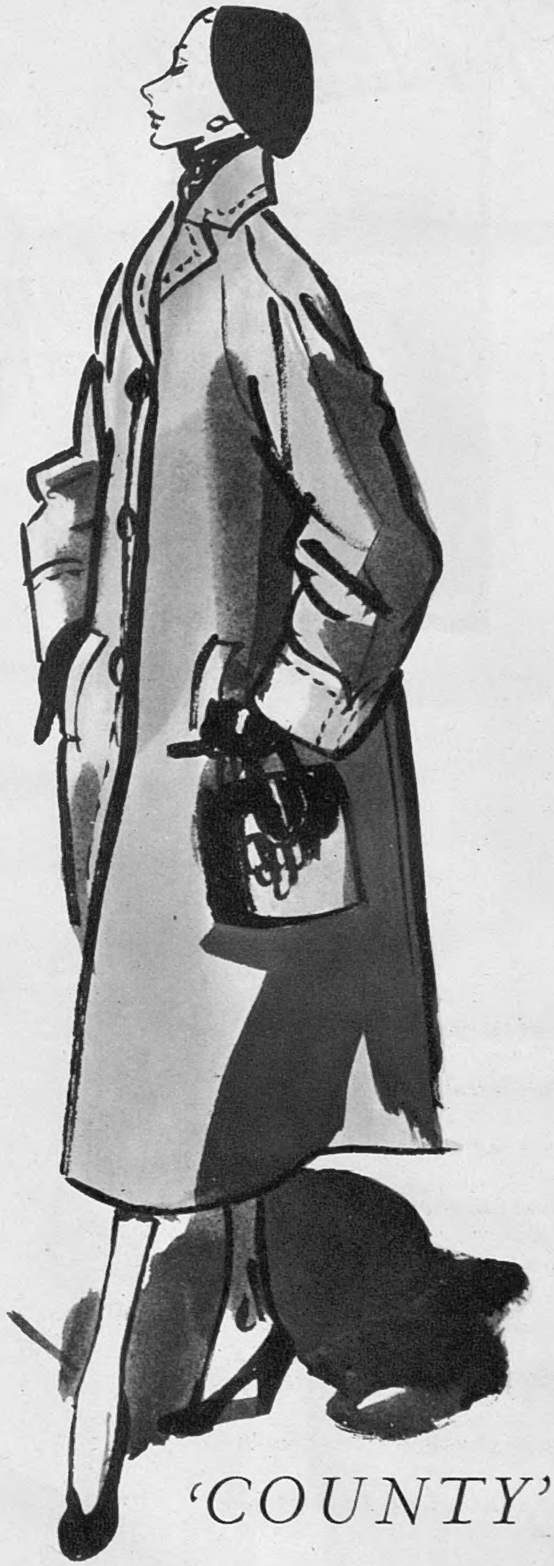

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The Sketch

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1953

AT THE CINEMA

Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, shortly after their return from Sandringham, went to the Rialto Cinema on February 11 for a screening of the much-discussed René Clair film, *Les Belles de Nuit*. Pictures from this delightful film, which was selected for a Royal showing from the recent French Film Festival, can be seen on page 161.

FOLLOWING IN FATHER'S FOOT-STEPS—A father with definite ideas on child-rearing is *Chappie*, who, with his owner, Eric Irvine, of Hanworth, Middlesex, travels all over the country giving Road Safety displays. Here, *Chappie* takes time off to train his own family in kerb drill. Parental control? Child's play, when you know how!

Our Motley Notes

By Toby O'Brien

THIS winter's fantastic weather must surely have broken all records for unpleasantness. In Ireland, on the other hand, to which I paid my annual visit to shoot woodcock in Co. Galway as the guest of Dr. Oliver Chance, they have had blue skies and bright sunshine from the middle of December until the time of writing. So much so, that there is a serious shortage of water in some parts of Ireland, and the snipe-shooting in the West has been spoilt in many parts by lack of water.

This annual expedition is a recurrent delight. Nowhere, I feel, can there be a more cheerful set of guns, and as for the beaters, I am quite certain that they are without parallel anywhere. The shoot consists of Forestry Commission plantations for which, I believe, "Bill" Chance pays the appalling rent of £3 a year, and smallholdings, for which he pays the further vast sum of 3d. an acre for every acre walked over—a matter of nice, if informal, calculation. The Forestry Commission plantations provide excellent covers for cock when they are young, and also later, when the trees have grown sufficiently to kill the brambles. A large number of plantations, however, that come in between provide the most murderous beating, consisting of young conifers 6 to 10 ft. in height, closely interlaced with brambles.

The Moyode beaters, however, led by the indomitable Tom Kennedy, will go through anything. A few years ago, "Bill" said, on facing one particularly thick cover: "It is no good going in there, Kennedy. You'll only tear yourselves to pieces, and you won't get the cock out." Kennedy, however, is as conservative as an I.R.A. leader, and we heard him say to his fantastic crew, with their no less fantastic team of dogs: "'Tis death or glory now, boys." Somehow they got through that cover, though at the end of it they looked rather like the picture of the "Roll-call of the Guards at Inkerman."

Kennedy has a voice compared with which the most brazen-lunged Guards R.S.M. emits but a gentle plaintive piping, and his gallant team lacks nothing in exhortation. I suspect, too, that Kennedy's threats to lay his stick across laggards are not mere words. Some, however, have learnt the art of keeping out of his way. One character—Paddy Reilly—who walks five miles to and from the shoot, so as not to "disoblige the doctor," is the object of a stream of exhortation, objurgation and enquiry. I could not help being amused when Kennedy led his army into a particularly vicious-looking cover, out of which there emerged a great yell of "Are you in it, Paddy Reilly?" To which Paddy Reilly, who was walking beside me up a ride, shouted back, with a twinkle at me out of his bright blue eyes: "I am, Tom, but the thorns are tearing me asunder."

One would like to carry about a recording machine to catch the accent and turn of phrase of these remarkable Galway beaters. "Bill" himself has a remarkable store of Irishisms, of which one which he told me on this occasion will ever delight me. Some years ago, he had to go down to Connemara on a Saturday to see a patient. By the time he had done so it was too late to get back to Dublin, or even to any main centre of population, so he stayed the night in a small West of Ireland hotel. The only other guest was a cheerful commercial traveller, who, in the course of the evening, had rather more than that "just a tint" of Irish whiskey to which the most reluctant toper can be pressed. The next morning, as he had not appeared, "Bill" thought that he had better go and see how he was. He knocked at the door but got no answer. When he knocked a second time and louder, a faint groan was heard from within, which he took to be an invitation to enter. He asked the green face with closed eyes on the pillow how he was feeling, and got the reply: "Ah, b'God, an' I'd be dead if I had the will to stiffen."

From Athenry we motored south to Dromoland, the family's ancestral home, a large part of which Donough and Anne Inchiquin have turned into a guest house. The weather was perfect, the daffodils were beginning to come out, and the quiet of this beautiful place, as usual, had an almost positive quality, like the lovely lines about the traveller who knocked on the moonlit door:

. . . and the silence surged softly backwards,
When the plunging hooves were gone.

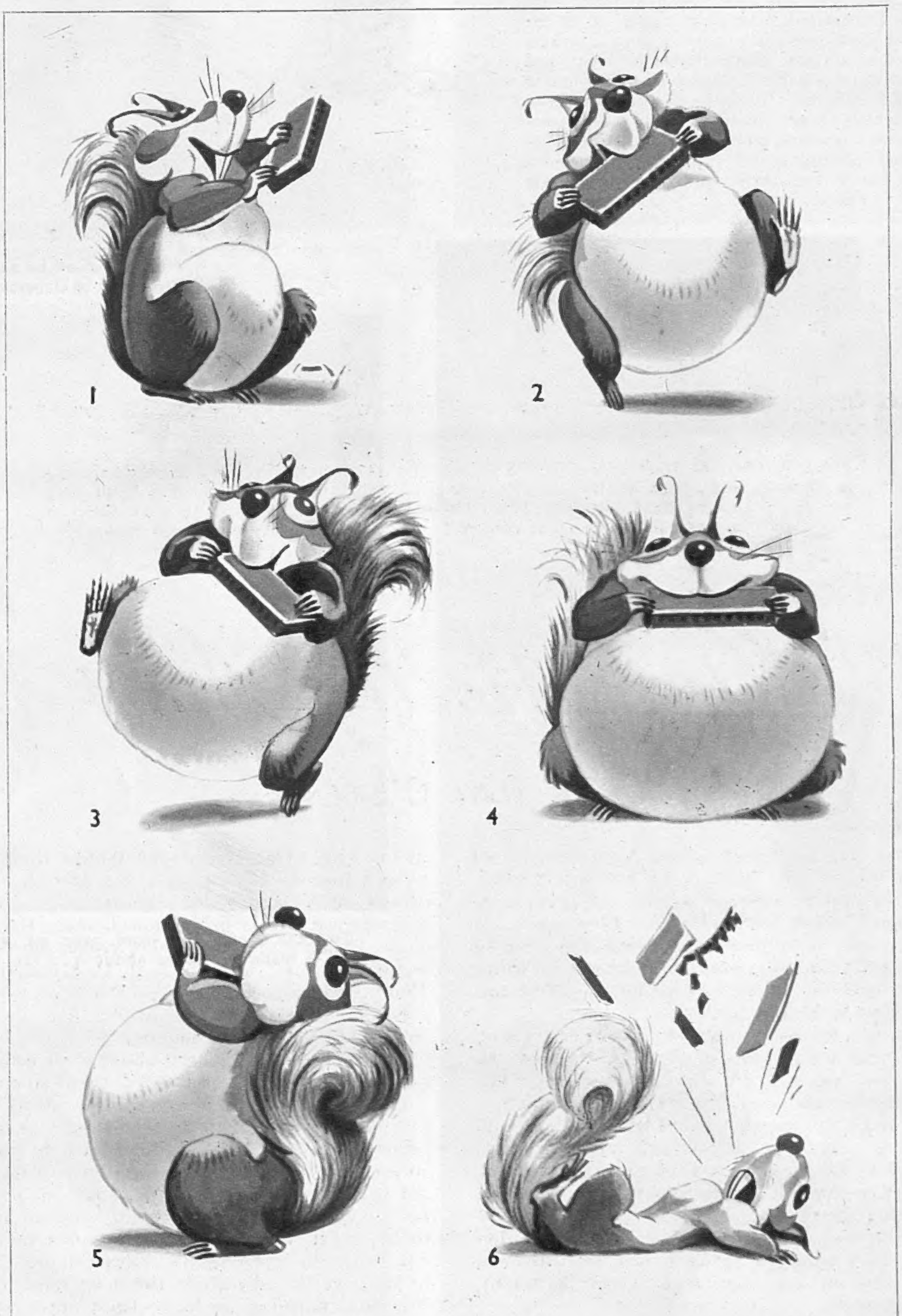
Not unnaturally, Dromoland has become popular with Americans,

and a delightful lot on the whole they have proved to be. Donough and Anne took the wise precaution of not taking anybody who was not recommended by a friend. Very occasionally, however, there is a slip-up, like the American gentleman whom they were asked to receive urgently by an air line, and who, for the few unhappy days of his stay, insisted on wearing his hat at all meals to show his democratic defiance of a thousand years-plus of Irish history!

MY theory about the genealogy of stories, and the fact that they crop up again and again in each generation, has received several confirmations recently. For instance, I was amused to see that somebody, writing about the late Harold Laski, described him attending a reception given at our Embassy in Moscow in 1946. "Though many of the Russians present understood English," said the writer, "it was often left to him to explain to them the significance of Laski's aphorisms and epigrams." I particularly liked that last little bit, because among Laski's "aphorisms and epigrams," which were then quoted, there was not one which was original. For example: One Russian in particular was bombarding him with questions about various prominent persons. I recall such replies as: "So-and-so has been sitting on the fence so long that the iron has entered his soul." So far from that being an original Laski, it was, I think, an L.G. or an F. E. Smith crack about Sir John Simon, as he then was.

In the same way, reading the table talk of the acidulated little "banker poet" Samuel Rodgers, who knew everybody of importance from about 1780 to 1850, I found the following remark attributed to Horne Tooke. "To Judge Ashurst's remark, that the law was open to all, both to the rich and to the poor, Tooke replied: 'So is the London Tavern.'" Now I had always heard that attributed, as I am sure all readers of my generation will have done, to Bernard Shaw, though with the Ritz substituted for the London Tavern. In the same way, the famous story about the Duke of Wellington, the subaltern and the rat in the bottle appears in Samuel Rodgers' table talk in the following form: "A person once asserted that in a particular country the bees were as large as sheep. He was asked: 'How big, then, are the hives.'—'Oh,' he replied, 'the usual size.'"

The Wellington story, of course, is of the occasion when the Duke, in the Peninsular War, was describing how he once saw a rat in a bottle, to which a newly-joined subaltern ventured to say: "Surely, Sir, it must have been either a very small rat or a very large bottle?" Whereupon the Duke fixed him with a glittering eye, and said: "On the contrary, Sir, it was a very large rat and a very small bottle"—where the matter rested.



Bushy — FORTISSIMO DEFLATATO — by Hargrave

OF all friendly good companions Major Lewis Willett, formerly in the Black Watch, was undoubtedly one of the nicest. I cannot believe that he had an enemy in the world. For many years he was the Circulation Manager of the *Daily Telegraph*, and saw its circulation rise from some 90,000 to over 1,000,000 just before the outbreak of the last war. When paper rationing led to stringent reductions, the *Telegraph* decided that in order to keep certain features they would cut their circulation rather than go below six pages. As a result, every one of the 200,000-odd readers who were thus deprived, picked up telephones, sent telegrams, or wrote to Lewis. I happened to meet him about this time, and asked him how things were. "Oh, all right, my dear Toby," he replied. "But I never thought I should live to see the day when I should refer to our 'dear readers' as those lousy so-and-sos!"

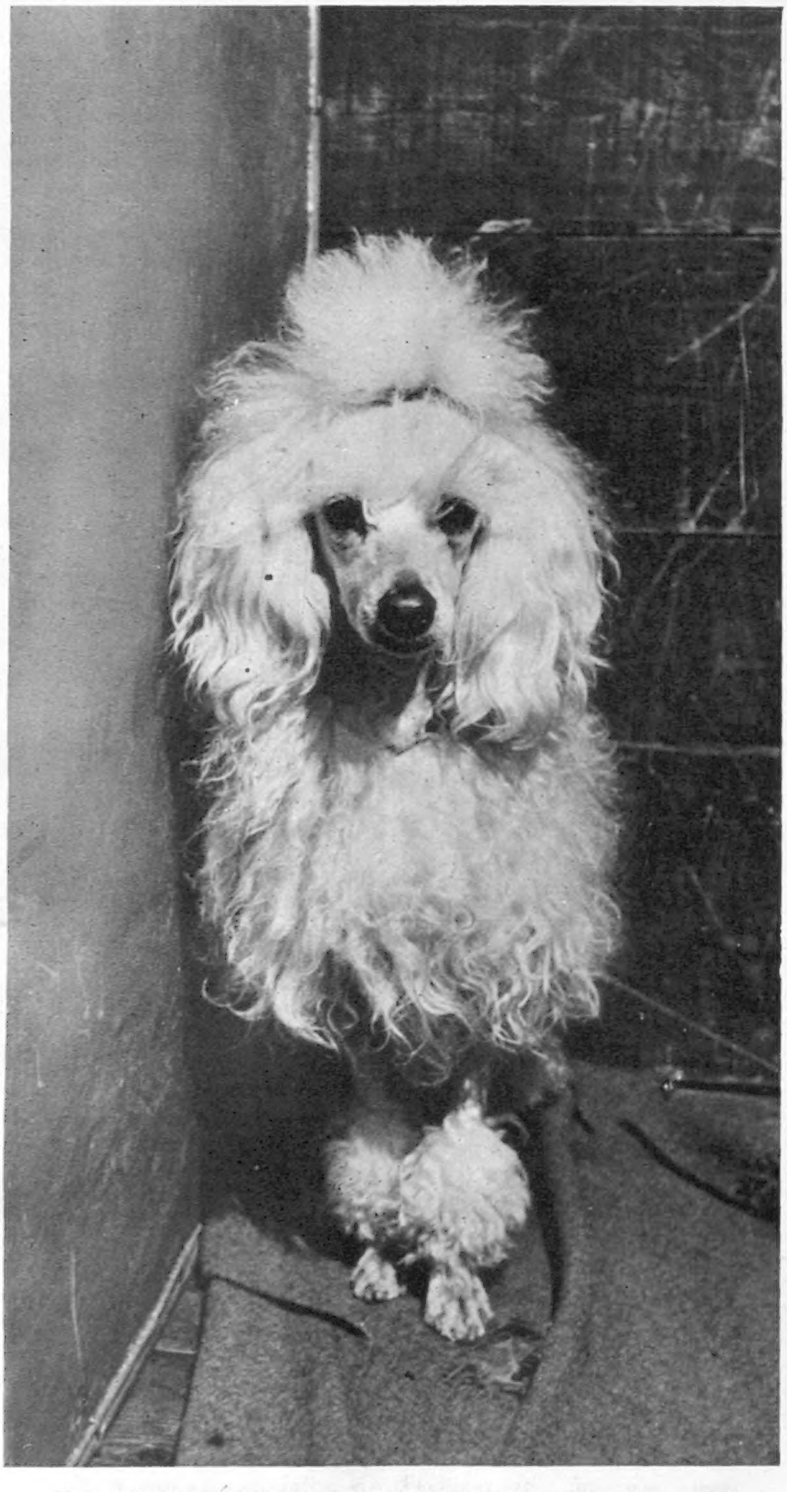
THE floods and the disruption of communications which have resulted, have placed a further heavy strain on the special department of the G.P.O. which deals with badly or inadequately addressed letters and packages. This special team have developed a detective sense which would do credit to Scotland Yard. One of their most ingenious solutions was when a few years ago they got a letter addressed to a rating in H.M.S. So-and-so—"Arijaba." Gazetteers and maps were ransacked to find ports on the coasts of the Somalilands, or in Latin America, at which the cruiser might have touched. Finally, someone had an inspiration and found what proved to be the right solution. "Arijaba" = "Harwich Harbour."

I MUST confess that a postscript to a letter I have received from a friend about another friend does something to justify the feminine view that men can, if necessary, be cattier than their own sex. It reads: "An admirer asks me if Blank's tailor is Philip Harben. 'Surely,' he said, 'those clothes are cut with a knife and fork?'"

Seen at Cruft's

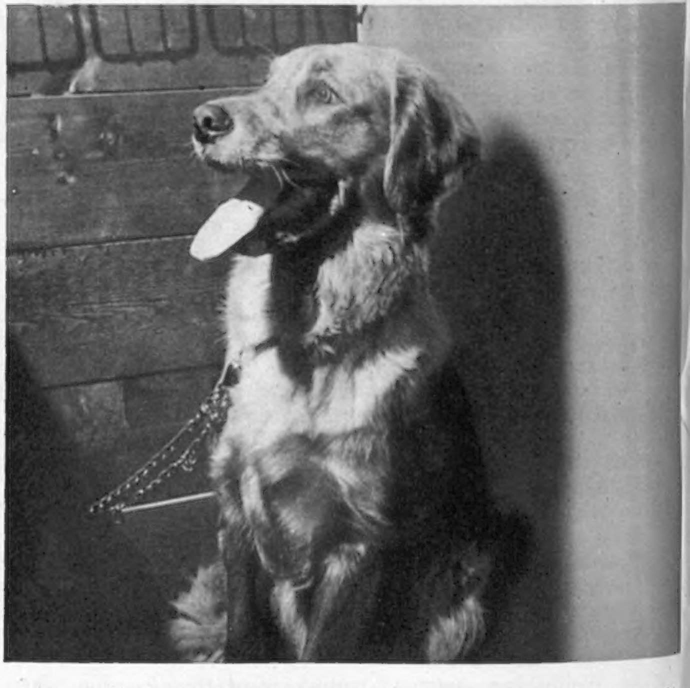
Cruft's Show is always a highly popular event of the London year, and the show at Olympia on February 6 and 7 upheld the tradition. In keeping with the present-day trend towards smaller dogs, there were more entries of Pekingese than any other breed, and the next most popular were Cairn terriers and Dachshunds. Smallest dog of all in the show was a Chihuahua, weighing only 2 lb. Supreme championship went to a Great Dane, shown on right, and reserve best in the show was Mr. E. Abson's Afghan hound *Champion Netheroyd Alibaba*. Winner of the obedience competition, in which great interest was taken, was Mr. W. H. Shackleton's working collie Obedience Champion *Zena*. Our special photographer, Harold White, went to have a look round the show and recorded these expressions . . .

Monarch of all he surveys : Great Dane Champion *Elch Edler of Ouborough*, " Best dog in the Show."



You can't *ask* me to face them like this ! My poor *hair*—I 've washed it and I simply can't do a *thing* with it !

" You can't pull the wool over *my* eyes, young man ! " I said. I made no bones about it, I can tell you. I said . . .



Bones ? Somebody mention bones ? I mean—I don't want you to think I 'm the type who hasn't got a soul above food, but *bones* !

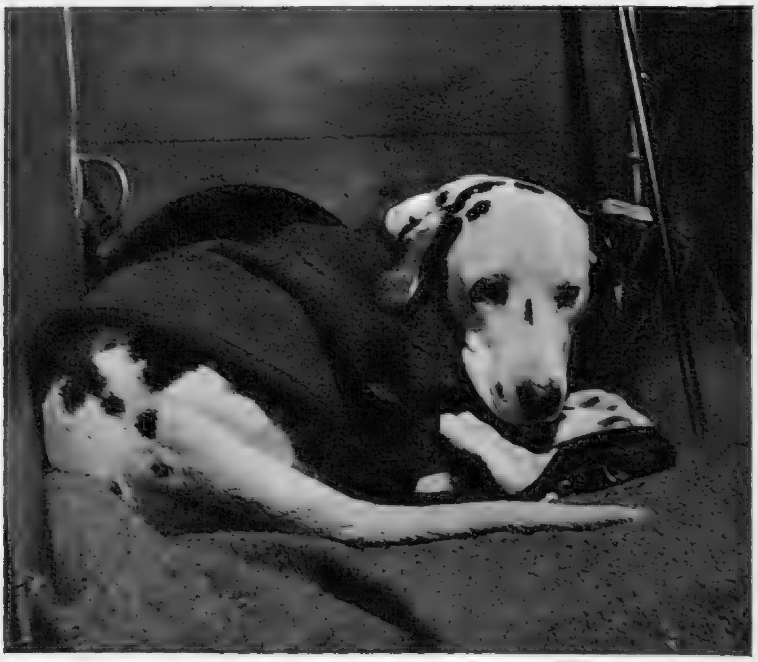
Really, old man, I was absolutely dog-tired ! Last thing I remember some chap wanted to see my tongue—I just left it out . . .

What did that fellow say ? Give him a cigar ? Oh, very funny, very funny ! These young pups are not what they were in *my* day.

Honestly, I *always* lick people's hands—it 's *unkind* of you to talk of cupboard love ! And, anyway, it was only water !

And then, of course, it turned out that it had been this travelling salesman fellow all the time ! Laugh ! I thought I 'd die !

And so to bed—or is that blessed photographer still there ? Hasn't he got a home to go to ? Why doesn't he *go* ?



What, *still* here ? Do you really *like* lugging that camera around ? I wouldn't !—strikes me it 's an absolute dog's life !

OUR BOOKSHELF

THE GREAT WASH. By Gerald Kersh. (*Heinemann; 12s. 6d.*)
THE WOMAN AND THE WHEEL. By T. B. Morris. (*Frederick Muller; 10s. 6d.*)
THE SOFT VOICE OF THE SERPENT. By Nadine Gordimer. (*Gollancz; 12s. 6d.*)
WHERE I LIVE. By Ronald Duncan. (*Museum Press; 15s.*)

by RUPERT CROFT-COOKE

THE theme of *The Great Wash*, by Gerald Kersh, though it concerns atomic scientists, is painfully dated, a dry bone of a theme at which too many literary dogs have nibbled, and even Mr. Kersh's remarkable gifts cannot do more than polish it up and make it look new. A plot by a group of evil men to dominate the world defeated by three defenceless adventurers takes us back to John Buchan. The nature of the plot, a piece of scientific hocus, might have come from H. G. Wells. But the integuments are the author's own, and one's regret that they have been used to cover an old story is modified by the fact that they might have been less dashing and characteristic if Mr. Kersh had felt no challenge. He uses all his arts and energies to cover the basic banality of the idea. There are two magnificent portraits here, neither overdrawn, but both gorgeous with Kershian embellishments, both a little larger than life. One is George Oaks, the garrulous, hard-boiled, yet secretly idealistic journalist who romps through the book and to his death in a rush of quotation, diverse and curious knowledge, heroism and secret fears. The other is Monty Cello, a type whom we have learnt from the films to call a small-time gangster. He is brash but frightened, crude and sentimental, and has a disturbing habit of giving American neckties as presents. The story runs from an old house in Sussex to an atomic experimental station in the wilds of Canada, where Lord Kadmeel and his Sciocrats prepare to destroy part of the world and control the rest, and in the meantime use the latest methods of torturing their prisoners. But all the way Mr. Kersh, eloquent, informative and witty, leads us jauntily along.

AFTER a few dozen pages of *The Woman and the Wheel*, by T. B. Morris, one becomes conscious of something unnatural about the dialogue and movements of the characters. What makes them talk and behave like people on the stage of a West End theatre? Why does the action all take place in one setting? Why is the cast limited to seven pronounced characters, each of whom has his lines to speak? The answer is that whatever the author may have intended this to be, it is not a novel but a play. Leave the dialogue and turn the bits of narrative into stage directions, and there it is, in three acts, with effective curtains at the right moments. The idea is an intriguing one. The action takes place in an old millhouse twenty years after a certain night on which a famous painter (who still lives there) lost his memory, his model disappeared, and his friend, a well-known writer, walked out of the house for good. Now the writer is dead and his son, anxious for information, arrives at the mill with his secretary and stirs up a great deal of dirty water, with highly dramatic results. Unfortunately, what did happen twenty years ago is less interesting than it ought to have been, and all the characters seem too concerned with exchanging telling and dramatic dialogue to be much like human beings. Yet in a high-pitched unnatural way the book has fascination and the kind of brilliance that comes from good production and lighting.

THE publishers claim for *The Soft Voice of the Serpent*, by Nadine Gordimer, that it is a real "discovery," and I think they may well be right. They go on to lecture us as follows: "To say of Miss Gordimer that for one so young she reveals a remarkable maturity in her work is to patronise it." Why? For one so young she does, and it is pleasant to say so. She has the gift, often and rightly called uncanny, of informing some commonplace incident or situation with an inner emotional significance which makes the reader sweat or laugh or tremble with the characters in the story. She can make a stale fish or a crippled locust or a maimed bird

SHANTA—an illustration from *The Other Mind* (*Gollancz; 52/6*), by Beryl de Zoete, who chose her title from the Bali name given to the ecstasy into which the dancer's own movements sweep him. The book deals with dancing in South India.

quite heart-rending by their implied effects on ordinary people. She can make one afraid for those who, in the end, do not need sympathy perhaps, so that one is hurt by their indifference. Her stories are set in South Africa, and although this gives them some vivid and exotic touches, it has little or no significance because their humanity is of the universal kind. She is capable, too, of a fine piece of rhetoric. "He occurs in every war. He must have been at Waterloo, at Balaklava, at Ladysmith, at Gallipoli; an archetype of great physical beauty, energy, gaiety, magnificent in an officer's uniform, some germ that springs up to life from the morbid atmosphere of war like those extraordinary orchid-fungi that appear overnight out of the sodden soil of dark hidden places. He is the manifestation of the repellent fascination of war; wonderful enough to be worthy of sacrifice as an offering—at the same time too much a tantalisation of what life might be like to be given without a pang and a doubt. Utterly innocent himself, everyone who looks at him gains a spurious nobility. Your heart beats with excitement and at the same time tears rim your eyes."

A FRIENDLY, sincere, humorous book about living in Devonshire is Ronald Duncan's *Where I Live*. He tells of his purchase of an old mill on the North Devon coast and then describes the treasures washed up by the sea—butter and Burgundy (80 gallons of this), airtight tins of American coffee in perfect condition, 50,000 cigarettes. He faced a magistrates' bench over aviation petrol found on his foreshore, and finally had to move from his cottage and the temptations of beachcombing. He writes wisely of regional characteristics: "The two fundamental factors which govern the character of a people are: first, their depth of soil, and secondly, their prevailing weather. I suspect the clipped vowels, the thrift and the canniness of the Scots is derived from the fact that in the Highlands the granite almost protrudes through the soil; and conversely in Devonshire, where we sit on almost a foot of rich red loam and enjoy—or shall we say suffer?—a regular rainfall and a clement temperature, you find a broader vowel and a less energetic temperament." Then come matters topographical and agricultural, always described with good humour and often with deep perception. Then fishing, salmon poaching and poaching of all kinds, tin-mining, witchcraft, local legends, food and drink—a chapter of luscious delights—folk songs and ballads and a few Devonian poets. At the end of it all the author, who has been trying to decide why he chose Devonshire, decides: "The supreme reason I still live in Devon is because it has become my home. That is sufficient."

YOUR LIBRARY LIST

THE SECRET OF MISS LOTTINGER.
By Neil Bell. (*Alvin Redman; 10s. 6d.*)

PLYMOUTH ADVENTURE: THE VOYAGE OF THE *MAYFLOWER*. By Ernest Gebler. (*Cassell; 15s.*)

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.
By Dorothy Hewlett. (*Cassell; 25s.*)
A very good new biography.

DRUM SINGERS.
By Lau Shaw. (*Gollancz; 12s. 6d.*)
A Chinese novel by the author of *Rickshaw Boy*.

JEAN ANOUILH.
By Edward Owen Marsh. (*W. H. Allen; 16s.*)
A study of the work of the author of *Ring Round the Moon*.

CALL THE TOFF.
By John Creasey. (*Hodder and Stoughton; 7s. 3d.*)
Mr. Creasey continues his popular "Toff" series as vigorously as ever.

THE BLUE HUSSAR.
By Roger Nimier. (*MacGibbon and Kee; 12s. 6d.*)
A novel by a young Frenchman who has been called by an English critic "one of the most brilliant writers in France."

APULIAN SUMMER.
By Michael Lloyd. (*Heinemann; 15s.*)
The publishers call this a book of essays and it is refreshing to see the word properly used. The essays are well-written autobiographical sketches in Oxford and Italy.

TOO SOON TO DIE.
By Henry Wade. (*Constable; 10s. 6d.*)
Mr. Wade, whose novels *Be Kind to the Killer* and *Lonely Magdalen* have given him a name for authenticity in police affairs, here produces a story with a strong human situation.

SIMPLE HERALDRY.
By Iain Moncreiffe and Don Pottinger. (*Nelson; 10s. 6d.*)
Publishers' blurbs on the fly-leaf of jackets are usually read in conjunction with the traditional pinch of salt, but we shall review this book by quoting the jacket word for word. "In this popular approach to what has been aptly described as 'the floral border in the garden of history,' the authors have contrived to combine gay and colourful illustrations with terse and authoritative text. Heraldry is indeed displayed not only as a picturesque record of the courage and achievements of past leaders of the people, but also as part of a great tapestry into which has been woven the story of our national development, of business enterprise and corporate responsibility." It is all this and more.

A FISH BALL DISH

(with some champagne)

Students of Oxford's Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art gave an unusual touch to their dance at the Randolph Hotel, Oxford, on February 6, by decorating the ballroom with huge murals of colourful fish and other lurid monsters of the deep and offset these with others, more down-to-earth, of outsize champagne bottles. Nearly 200 young people enjoyed a very gay evening.

L. to r.: Miss Maureen Haslem-Fox, Mr. David Campbell (Jesus), Miss Judy Simmonds, a Ruskin student who had helped with the extravagant décor, and Mr. David Turnbull.

L. to r.: Mr. H. Franklin (Exeter) and Mlle. M. Piraud, a visitor from France, with Dr. and Mrs. C. Williams. Dr. Williams is a Rhodes Scholar from Texas, U.S.A.

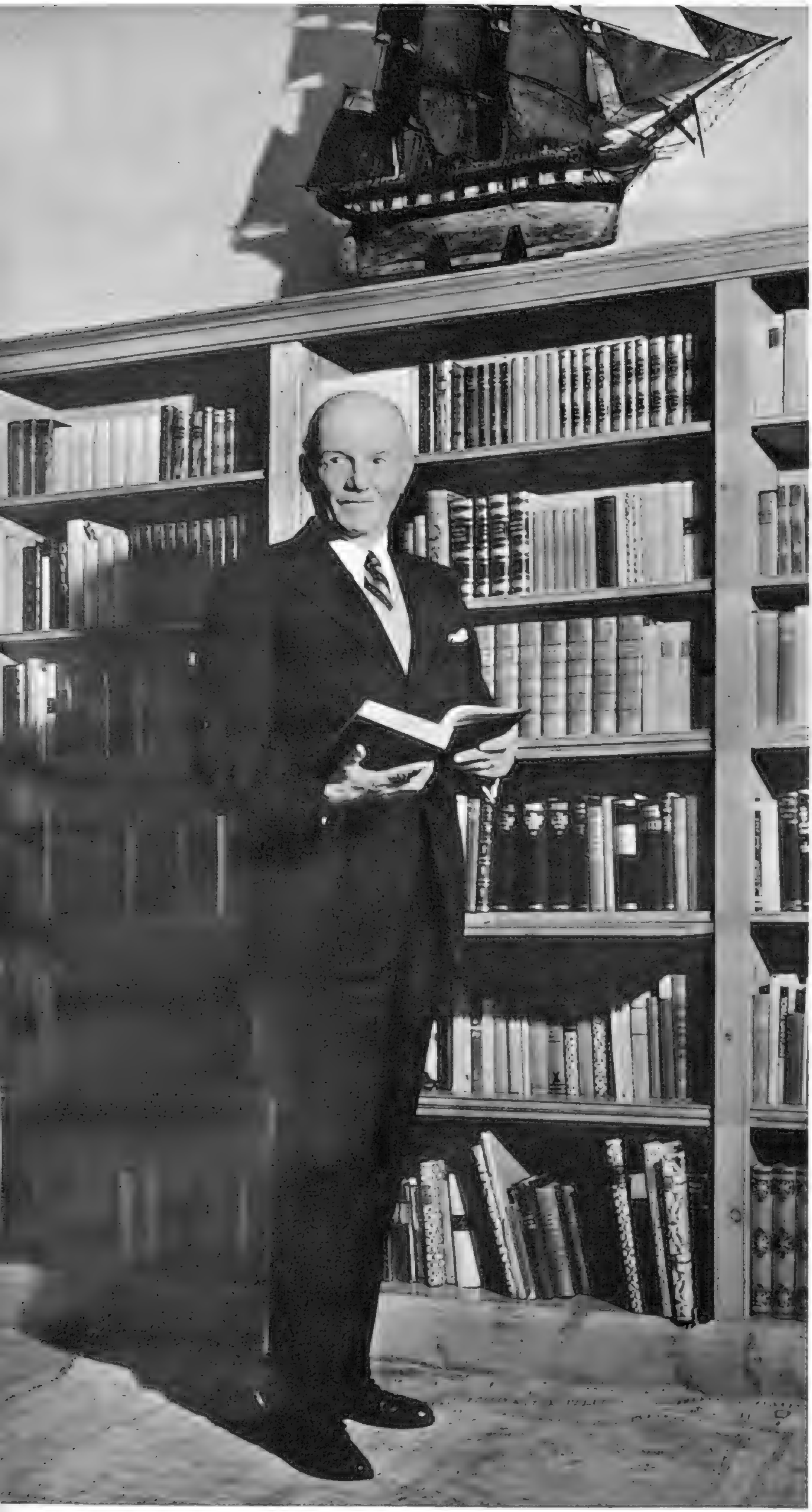
Well lassooed with streamers, Mr. John Westhead (St. John's) and Miss Marcia Hall spare no energy during an eight-some.

M. Nicholas Marcantonakis (Magdalen), who comes from Greece, partnered Mlle. Amy Matouk (St. Anne's), over from Egypt, in a samba.

Mr. Michael Parkin, a member of the Colonial Service up at Magdalen, seemed to be having an earnest conversation with Miss Leonora Anderson.

Resting between dances were (*l. to r.*) Miss Pauline Osborne-King, Mr. Peter Whitehouse (Lincoln), Mr. Christopher Harris (Trinity) and Miss Shirley Ashton, who is up at Somerville.

Miss Ulla Schmidt sat out between (*left*) the Hon. Desmond Guinness (Christ Church) and Prince Lowenstein-Wertheim-Freudenberg (Magdalen).



The Ambassador spends many happy hours in his fine library, where a wide variety of books shows his great diversity of tastes. Many of the volumes are gifts from the authors, including our own Prime Minister.

Baron Wimmer shows photographs and cordial greetings from high-ranking dignitaries and friends, including H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent and the late Field-Marshal Smuts.

The World's Envoys to the Court of Queen Elizabeth

3.—BARON LOTHAR WIMMER

(Ambassador for Austria)

ON the handsomely broad face of the tall, grey-haired man entering No. 18, Belgrave Square, there was an expression of concern—Baron Lothar C. F. Wimmer, Austria's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary since 1950, had just noticed some cars leaving a house at the corner of the Square. They were the limousines carrying the Deputy Foreign Ministers who had just held their 250th (or thereabouts) meeting to decide whether Austria should at last have a treaty of peace.

Baron Wimmer, Austria's first Ambassador in London since 1914; when Austro-Hungary was a great empire which decided to march with the Kaiser and paid a heavy penalty, knows No. 18 well, for he served here from 1930 till 1934 as second-in-command of the Mission, then a Legation.

No. 18, Belgrave Square was severely bombed during the war, but has now been wholly restored, at an approximate cost of £120,000, partly paid by the War Damage Commission. Thus the Ambassador has the advantage of occupying a superb residence that is in every respect new and fresh and planned for its purpose. There is a light-heartedness about his step as he shows you the library high up in the residence where his books include an autographed volume by Mr. Churchill himself. Here he inevitably spends much of his time reading and re-reading official collections of documents, for he finds in them a fascinating guide to the work of to-day and to-morrow.

Baron Wimmer's career has been truly romantic, as variegated, in fact, as that of his own country. Viennese doctor of law,

Baroness Wimmer, who takes an active interest in the work of the Mission, pictured in the private apartments with some of their beloved family treasures.

This small drawing-room, colourfully and restfully decorated, is a great favourite with the busy envoy and his wife.

at twenty-eight he became Secretary to the Prime Minister. For seven years he continued in a similar capacity near the fount of power, with sundry Chancellors. Then in 1926, at thirty-seven, he rocketed to Foreign Minister, one of the youngest in Europe. Following a re-shuffle he went back to diplomacy, reaching London. Promotion again followed and he was head of Mission to Athens, Cairo and Albania respectively. His qualities led to his appointment to Belgrade, where he stayed from 1937 until Hitler trampled on Vienna in 1938. Baron Wimmer, finding it discreet not to return to Vienna, retired into private life in Switzerland, where existence during the war was often a struggle, but where he and the Baroness were at least secure from the grasp of Hitler.

After the war the Wimmers went to Belgium, thence to the Mecca of diplomacy. Sprightly talker, genial, the envoy fills his delicate post in London with tact and grace. The gay light furniture of Austria; the Ambassador's ready smile; the cheerfulness of the Ambassadress—these are the essence of No. 18, maybe London's Embassy of destiny.

Baroness Wimmer is entirely responsible for the much-praised choice of decorations at the Embassy. Here she stands with her husband on the graceful staircase before a lovely seventeenth-century Belgian tapestry entitled *Wind and Rain*.

Former Windmill girl Jean Brampton, who recently scored a great success as understudy to Billie Worth in *Call Me Madam*.

He joined the Windmill in 1949, is known to millions of listeners to the B.B.C. : Arthur English, "Prince of the Wide Boys."

Lovely Mrs. Guilio Trapani, whose husband is the owner of Skindles Hotel, Maidenhead. She is former Windmill girl Anita D'Ray.

THE WINDMILL CAME OF AGE

On February 4, the Windmill Theatre celebrated its twenty-first anniversary of non-stop revue with a party at the Trocadero Restaurant. To mark the occasion, the staff and members of the company presented their owner-manager-producer, Mr. Vivian Van Damm, with his portrait, painted in oils by James Bateman, R.A. In twenty-one years, the theatre, which even a war could not close, has seen the rise of many stars, both male and female, and it is doubtful if any other impresario can claim to have given so many up-and-coming youngsters the opportunity to put their feet upon the stairway to fame.

Another former Windmill girl at the party: Sonia Stacpoole, now the wife of band leader Harry Roy.

Valerie Tandy is now principal girl with the Crazy Gang at the Victoria Palace in *Ring Out the Bells*.

Pretty brunette Jobyna Millhouse with her cup. Miss Millhouse, who was born at Boscombe, Hampshire, first appeared at the Windmill Theatre in July 1948, and has been there ever since.

Receiving her trophy from Emile Littler, who presented it to the Windmill in 1948, is twenty-two-year-old Jobyna Millhouse, who was elected "Windmill Girl of the Year" for 1952. On the right is popular commentator Leslie Mitchell.

Windmill girl Margot Holden, known to radio audiences, made her first appearance on TV in the cabaret.

The party was quite complete with this very famous Windmill old boy—"Professor" Jimmy Edwards.

Drawn by Peter Arno.

Courtesy: Robert Hale.

"Young woman, do you realise my time is worth five pounds a minute?"

GALLIMAUFRY

THE "Miss Bristol" contest planned as part of Bristol's Coronation celebrations is to be "no ordinary bathing-belle competition." The committee have asserted they will select "an intelligent young lady from photographs." One wonders whether the photographer or the subject herself will be asked to decide her I.Q.

* * *

When Senora Susana Gamboa, wife of the director in charge of the Exhibition of Mexican Art at the Tate Gallery, arrived in England she was not surprised to find us in the grip of a 90-m.p.h. gale, many roads blocked by snow, and thousands of workers on guard along our coastlines against new ravages from the sea. For with her, she brought Chac Mool, the Mexican Rain God. "He has never been out of Mexico before, and he has left chaos in his wake everywhere," she said. There were snowstorms in Stockholm, and gales on the journey, and the Mexican party's arrival at the Tate coincided with the evacuation of the basements in anticipation of possible flooding. As Chac Mool will be with us until the end of April (the Exhibition closes on April 26), the prospect before us is bleak!

* * *

In Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia, plans are being made to receive 1,000,000 visitors to the Rhodes Centenary Exhibition, which will be opened on July 8 by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Princess Margaret will accompany her mother. A friend who has been staying with the Exhibition's chairman, Sir Ellis Robins, tells me the coming Royal visit has given a tremendous fillip to the work in hand. To overcome the problems of accommodation, 2000 pre-fabricated houses, each consisting of one room with bathroom attached, are being built for visitors.

* * *

When Lord Mancroft told the House of Lords about an example of "dishonest trading" which he was determined to help stop by moving the second reading of the Merchandise Marks Bill, he sounded quite rueful. Under discussion was a bottle of whisky he had recently received—which was only half full! However, it was not the contents that mattered so much as the label, which was printed on a background of Clan McGregor tartan. "On the right-hand side," he said, "is written 'Pride of the Glen Gold Medal Liqueur Whisky,' and then, in very small letters at the bottom of the label, 'Made in Japan.'" Lord Mancroft told hot-under-the-collar Scotch drinkers, "I'm sorry to end the story on a disappointing note—the whisky was quite drinkable." It is to be hoped that the Bill will go through—one shudders at the thought of Nippon Nips, Tokyo tots, or a possible Hiroshima haggis!

* * *

From New Zealand I hear that the Stratford Players, led by Anthony Quayle, are playing to capacity houses in Auckland, while Tommy Trinder intrigues Wellingtonians with his particular brand of humour—and what was described to me as "his snazzy drop-head Bentley."

* * *

Extract from a newspaper report on a recent court proceeding: "If the evidence we have heard about your client is perfectly true, one small whisky or one small rum much to drink to affect his capacity. The question is whether he had so much to drink to acect his capacity to do his job." Well, anyway, *some*body's capacity seems to have been acected!

* * *

The St. John's, Oxford, King Charles Club are probably still pondering over the identity of the sender of the mystery telegram on the subject of their cancelled ceremony which was to have marked the 340th anniversary of the execution of King Charles I., but was forbidden by the college authorities. The telegram, which was sent from London, read: "Much regret Hanoverian interference with memorial rights of our late illustrious sovereign. Deep sympathy felt here.—(*Signed*) RUPERT." Mr. M. W. Browne, president of the Club, said: "We're not sure whether it's from Rupert of Hentzau or of the Rhine, or even Rupert of Bavaria, who is Stuart Pretender to the throne—or a hoax. We are making investigations." Meantime, Ernest Betts, P.R.O. of M.-G.-M., entered into the spirit of the thing and sent another telegram to add to the confusion: "Referring to your Charles I. memorial anniversary reported in current *Cherwell* wish to assure you telegram was not from Rupert of Hentzau who was at that time too busy appearing in *Prisoner of Zenda* for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Our theory is that it was Rupert of the Rhine."

* * *

Recent complaints from London licensees that their trade suffers as television popularity increases are in marked contrast to the situation in America, where most bars boast a television set, and the proprietors "never had it so good." Local licensees may shrink from installing sets for fear their remaining customers might be driven to sign the pledge by such unrehearsed incidents as the recent guessing-game mix-up, when viewers were told: "Here is a picture of Marie Antoinette in Prison," and were shown a jagged Bronze Age razor against a block of wood.

* * *

At Australia House, where a Tourist Information Centre has been established, the influx of Coronation visitors is now almost an invasion. The office is open to everyone, and although they do not undertake to reserve accommodation for visitors, they have a register of 7000 householders in and around London prepared to let rooms.

* * *

Two delightful instances of unconscious naïveté reach us from America. First: Columnist Leonard Lyons, writing in *Quick Magazine*, quotes actress Pat Englund, who tried to get two tickets to the Coronation from a Broadway ticket broker: "He says he could offer me two seats for Westminster Abbey—but they're not together." The second: the statement made by Miss Margaret Truman—"I think Dad's being President interrupted my career."

* * *

Filmgoers who saw Chaplin's *City Lights* will remember American film director Bob Parrish as the small boy with the pea-shooter who completed the comedian's final ignominy. Bob, whose *Rough Shoot* was premièred in London last week, is now out in East Pakistan choosing locations for a film based on the H. E. Bates novel *The Purple Plain*. He writes, "Gregory Peck will play the lead and I'm sure we can make a first-rate movie out of it." With a combination like Peck, Parrish and *The Purple Plain*, it has a head start.

* * *

I've come to the conclusion that some London shoe saleswomen deliberately practise Lifemanship on their customers. It works quite simply. You sit there, at least one shoe off, and thereby at a disadvantage right from scratch. You tell the girl your size—and this is her moment. Looking you coldly in the eye, she says "Yes, madam. Which is Your Big Foot?" I've got the answer, now. Next time it happens to me, I'll look right back and say, "The middle one."

Gallivant

People who matter . . .

MAHMOUD BEY FAWZI

(*Egypt's Foreign Minister*)

Who was behind the agreement on the Sudan, signed in Cairo between the British and Egyptian Governments? Undoubtedly His Excellency Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi, now, at fifty-two, Egypt's Foreign Minister. Till last Christmas he was Ambassador in the vast residence in South Audley Street, London. He is quiet, almost silent, speaks in the lowest imaginable pitch. The big head, imposing brow, dark eyes and dark hair do not impress themselves on the visitor, who is fascinated by his economy of movement, of words, of sound, by the slight pauses in speech, while the trained mind searches for the exact adjective. The English is, of course, truly flawless.

Effort means little to Dr. Fawzi. He was not satisfied with a doctorate in law, but also secured one in philosophy while serving in Rome. Was he satisfied with studying the scene in Liverpool? No. He made it a centre for explorations of "your truly beautiful country," patronised the Liverpool Repertory Theatre—"we had the fun of seeing plays before London premières"—and "grasped the feelings and thoughts of people, with a peep at their ways of living." In Kobe and Tokyo he learnt the world's second most difficult language, Japanese; in Athens he learnt Greek; in Washington and New York he held sundry important posts, including headship of the United Nations delegation at a critical moment.

When I had put my signature in a volume that was to be a farewell gift, Dr. Fawzi suddenly answered a question I had put a few seconds earlier, on Egypt's reflections. . . . "We have awakened from a long slumber, and find heavy weights on our shoulders. They must go."—G.B.

Enjoying a respite from the crowded dance floor are Lieut. R. d'A. Ryan, R.A., and Miss Joyce Brander.

A recently-engaged couple dancing happily are Miss Nancy Usherwood and Mr. Evan Cameron.

Snapped as they make their way to the dance floor are Miss Evelyn Bruce and Mr. John Boyd.

Coronation Ball

for the British Sailors' Society

On February 10, a really spectacular and highly colourful Coronation Ball was held in the Central Hotel, Glasgow, on behalf of the Scottish branch of the British Sailors' Society. Lord Inverclyde, chairman of the Scottish Advisory Committee of the Society, and his sister, the Hon. Mrs. McKenna, received the guests.

Highlight of the evening was a full-scale fashion parade for which a bevy of top-ranking London models were taken to Glasgow.

There were many really excellent prizes given at the ball—two Coronation seats in the Duke of Wellington's house in Piccadilly, a week's cruise around the Western Isles, and a dachshund, were some of them. The evening was rounded off very pleasantly when the guests sat down to breakfast at 1.30 a.m., and were served with kippers or ham and eggs, preserves, and tea or coffee.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by George Konig.

Miss Audrey Robin dancing with her kilted escort, Mr. Nairn Marshall ; they came from Whitecraigs for the ball.

Partnered by Lord Inverclyde is attractive film-star Joan Rice, who was married on February 16 to film salesman David Green.

[Continued overleaf

Coronation Ball (continued)

The Rev. William Martin, Organising Secretary of the Society, discusses the evening's programme with Lord Inverclyde, one of its vice-presidents. Looking on from *l. to r.* are the Hon. Mrs. McKenna, Rear-Admiral Crombie and Lady Allan Hay.

Caught in playful mood is this happy group : *left*, Mr. P. S. MacCallum and Mrs. A. G. McCrae, and facing them, *l. to r.*, Mr. B. Hepburn (*standing*), Mr. A. G. McCrae and Mrs. E. Southwood. Behind them other guests are obviously amused.

Watching the fashion parade in dresses that easily rivalled those of the models were, *l. to r.*, Mrs. Gilmour Smith, Mrs. Frank Macdonald and Mrs. Gordon Reid. On the extreme left is Baillie Gordon Reid, and across the table from him, Mr. Hugh Reid.

At the edge of the dance floor they had an excellent view of the fashion show, which was the highlight of the evening's programme and created great interest. From *l. to r.*, Mr. and Mrs. H. Mclaughlan, Mr. and Mrs. A. Ross, and Mr. and Mrs. David Murdoch.

Captain and Mrs. T. Murdoch, *left*, had just won a turkey prize on the tombola when this picture was taken. Across the table from Mrs. Murdoch are, *l. to r.*, Commander J. M. McGregor, R.N.V.R., Mrs. and Commander T. Carney, R.N.V.R., and Mrs. J. F. McGregor.

Taken unawares are, *l. to r.*, Mr. N. A. McCrae, Mrs. Charles Gorman, Mr. Charles Gorman, Mrs. Robert F. Braid, Mr. Robert F. Braid and Mrs. J. Horace Bennett. Mrs. Gorman and Mrs. Braid were members of the organising committee for this highly successful ball.

The finale of the very enjoyable show in which well-known models displayed lovely evening dresses especially designed for wear during Coronation festivities. Dark-haired model, *top centre*, is Miss Sally Churchill, niece of the Prime Minister. Beside her is Mr. Herbert Sidon, who designed the dresses in the show.

The men seem to be exchanging witticisms over the enslavement of the fair sex by Dame Fashion, but the ladies will have the last laugh! From *l. to r.*, Mrs. and Major G. Brunel-Cohen, Mr. and Mrs. J. Riddell, and Captain and Mrs. G. Robertson.

The design of the souvenir programme was much admired. Here, *l. to r.*, Mr. A. W. Murray, Mr. A. G. Murray, the Senior Magistrate, Mrs. James Manuel and Mrs. A. Martin look on while Mr. James Manuel shows the programme to Mrs. A. Murray.

For Sir Barry Jackson

(On the 40th Birthday of the Birmingham Repertory)

He is the Theatre :
And to-day we greet
The Midland man who realised his dream ;
Who spied the glory in the first pale gleam,
Who set the fires ablaze in Station Street.

Here, by the glow, the dazzled comers saw
Illyria, the lofty towers of Troy ;
They knew the word that went from Illinois ;
They knew the wit, the sanity of Shaw.

He is the Theatre :
He has felt its power,
Through forty years, to kindle or to bless ;
And he has deemed it, in all happiness,
Not forty years but one Immortal Hour.
J. C. T.

IT is just forty years since Barry Vincent Jackson came before the curtain on the first night of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre (February 15, 1913), and spoke John Drinkwater's prologue. It ended with the words: " *We have the challenge of the mighty line. God grant us grace to give the countersign.*" To-day, in congratulating Sir Barry Jackson on the fortieth anniversary of the " Rep," we know how finely the wish has been fulfilled ; how, throughout his career in the theatre, he has responded to the challenge of the mighty line.

Barry Jackson bears his seventy-three years lightly. They mean nothing to a man of his alacrity of spirit, his faith and hope. He is a great figure in the theatre. No one has done more for the English stage ; no one is honoured more sincerely than the tall, urbane, infinitely likeable man who is at once scholar and practitioner. He was born at Birmingham ; and with the Repertory Theatre—the most famous in the world—which he subsidised for so long, he has established his city in stage record. In London management he was an exciting name. The Birmingham " Rep " was the inspiration of the Malvern Festival. And it is to Barry Jackson that we owe the renaissance of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and of the Stratford-upon-Avon Festival. He is a firm Shakespearian. Who but he would have dared in these days to revive the *Henry the Sixth* trilogy (to be completed this summer with the rarity of rarities, *Part One*) ?

Think for a moment of the plays and players that Sir Barry has sponsored. Productions first: *Abraham Lincoln, Back to Methuselah, The Immortal Hour, The Farmer's Wife, The Apple Cart, The Barretts of Wimpole Street, The Marvellous History of St. Bernard* (which he translated), the modern-dress *Hamlet, For Services Rendered* ; as well as nearly 700 plays at the " Rep " alone. And the players : Laurence Olivier (who spoke in the moving anniversary broadcast), Ralph Richardson, Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies, Edith Evans, Cedric Hardwicke, Paul Scofield, a host of others. The designs of Paul Shelving ; the productions of H. K. Ayliff, Herbert Prentice, William Armstrong, Peter Brook, Douglas Seale : the names run on. Always we return to Barry Jackson, actor, producer, dramatist, designer, manager, patron, man of the theatre, Birmingham man, and—in the highest sense—man of the world.

AT THE THEATRE . . . *with J. C. Trewin*

A Woman of No Importance

(Savoy)

WHEN, in imagination, I attended the première (1893) of *A Woman of No Importance* on behalf of the Diamond Jubilee Number of *The Sketch*, I complained bitterly about Oscar Wilde's " redundant lepers," the way in which he had hidden his text in melodramatic draperies. It must have been hard, sixty years ago (as my other self pointed out), for an actress to speak some of the almost incredible lines of Mrs. Arbuthnot. I was delighted to find in the current revival at the Savoy—sixty years on—that the horrors had vanished. Not a word about the " little vineyard of my life " ; not a trace of the " ewe-lamb God sent me in pity or in wrath " ; not a hint of the dragging chain, the leper's mask, the purifying fire.

Here was cutting indeed. The original second and third acts, we found, had been run together. Apparently there was an adapter (unnamed) who did not mind very much what he did with the great Oscar, if only the wit were kept. But, towards the end of a long night, one began to doubt. Was the adapter so very reasonable, after all ? He had inserted a line (whether mock-Wilde or from some other source, I cannot say) to this effect : " To re-write anything is too trivial for a man of talent. Nothing should be re-written but the classics." And acting, presumably, on this advice, he proceeded to re-write his Wilde. Enough, surely, to lose the empurpled passages. What excuse could there be for wrecking the play's dramatic end ?

Granted that Wilde's emotional dialogue is false and cheap, at least he knew how to shape the play dramatically. As written, it should end a minute after Mrs. Arbuthnot has struck Lord Illingworth (her former seducer) across the face with her glove. He goes without a word ; Gerald, the son, rushes in, and within a few lines we have the question : " You have had a visitor. Who was it ? " ; and Mrs. Arbuthnot's answer (and curtain speech) : " Oh ! No one. No one in particular. A man of no importance."

The editor at the Savoy has taken great care to blanket this, to smother Wilde's theatrical device. Illingworth cannot go without a word. Not at all. He must say something about wearing his heart on his sleeve : " Being a man of fashion, I usually show very little sleeve." Worse is to follow. Suddenly the rout returns : Lady Hunstanton with Archdeacon Daubeny (who should not arrive in this act at all) ; and then, before our incredulous gaze, Mrs. Allonby (who, throughout, has Wilde's main set-pieces) and Illingworth himself. Away we go into a pitch-and-toss of sham-Wildean dialogue ; the drama is forgotten ; and when Illingworth leaves the stage again, he has to say to Gerald something like this : " So you 're determined to get married. If I may say so, that is one mistake your parents have never made." At last Mrs. Arbuthnot is allowed her line about the glove ; by now the drama is dead.

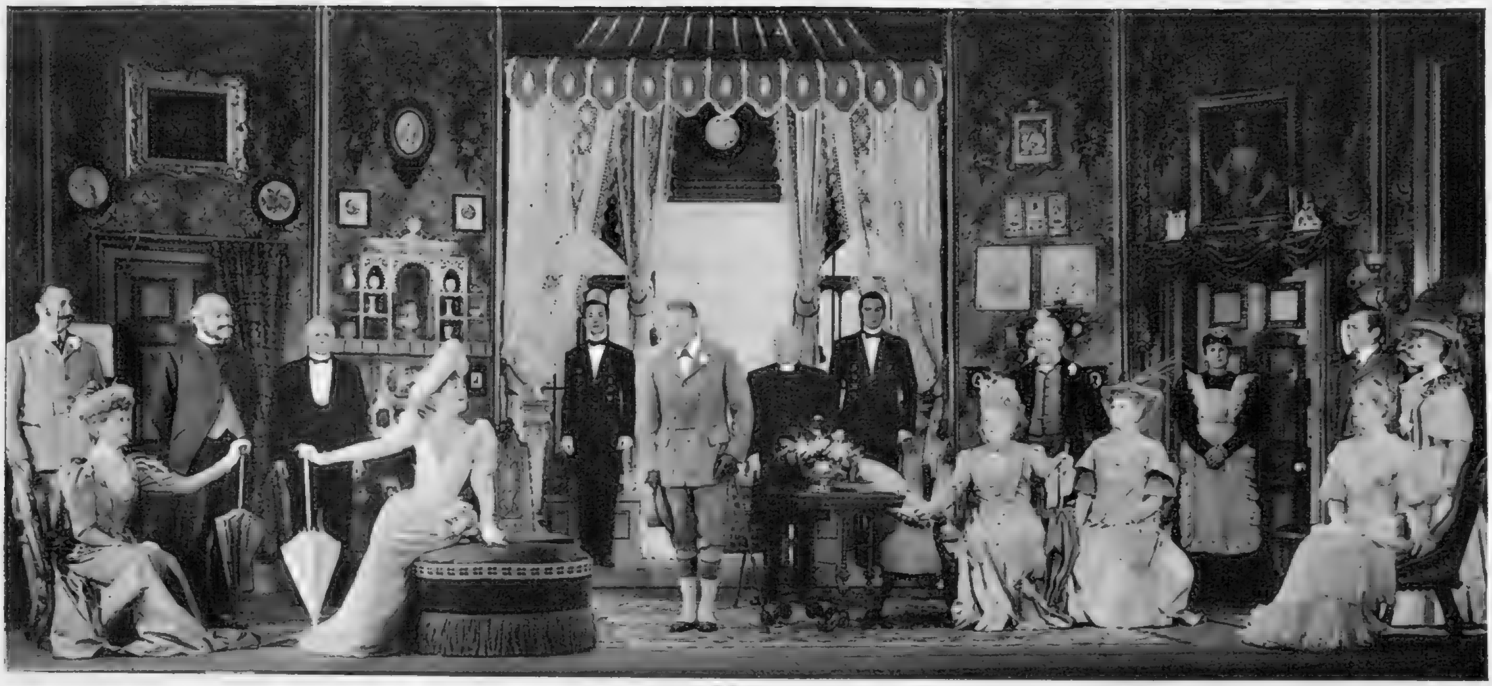
Some of the cast we could cheer without qualification : Athene Seyler, Jean Cadell, Isabel Jeans, and (in a small part, delightfully edged) William Mervyn. These we applauded for adding wit to wit ; Nora Swinburne and Frances Hyland for their gallantry and tact. I cannot say that Clive Brook is cast ideally as Illingworth. He looks the part ; he can control the stage ; but his voice is like a snapping of padlocks. Between them, Michael Benthall (producer) and Loudon Sainthill (designer) have created some lavish stage pictures. This revival proved once more that Wilde wrote one sustained play, and one only : *The Importance of Being Earnest.* Nothing else, I fear, matters.

The Shrike

(Princes)

I SUPPOSE one might say that the drama of *The Shrike* is also about a woman of no importance. It is easy to say so ; but she is, alas, all the world to her husband—in the sense that he must depend upon her to get him out of the shadow of a mental asylum. And he detests her as few men can have detested few women. Joseph Kramm, whose play won the Pulitzer Prize in New York, sets the entire scene in a New York hospital which seems to be ruled by a covey of more-or-less sinister psychiatrists. A new patient, who had attempted suicide, finds that, according to law, only his wife can secure his discharge. If she wishes, she can see him taken to a mental home. He is in the power of the woman who had driven him towards suicide.

What can be done ? One thing only. He must yield utterly to her. He must surrender the woman he loves. He must give up his freedom. He must yield, soul and body, to the deadly creature who is a personage Strindberg would have cheered. The dramatist calls her the " shrike " because that is the name of a predatory female butcher-bird that impales its mate upon thorns. It is a horrible tale ; and yet one would not leave the theatre without hearing the worst. That is as much as one can say of a drama acted now with force by Constance Cummings and Sam Wanamaker. But it is not really an experience one wishes to undergo again.



A WOMAN OF NO IMPORTANCE.—The entire company at the end of the revival of Oscar Wilde's play. This well-known piece is directed by Michael Benthall and is at the Savoy Theatre. Tableau shows Charles Perry (Lord Alfred), Joan Benham (Lady Stutfield), Philip Burton (Mr. Kelvil), Stringer Davis (Butler), Isabel Jeans (Mrs. Allonby), Paul Anstee (Footman), Clive Brook (Lord Illingworth), Aubrey Mather (Archdeacon Daubeny), Peter Bayliss (Footman), Athene Seyler (Lady Hunstanton), William Mervyn (Sir John Pontefract), Jean Cadell (Lady Caroline Pontefract), Daphne Newton (Alice), Peter Barkworth (Gerald Arbuthnot), Nora Swinburne (Mrs. Arbuthnot) and Frances Hyland (Hester Worsley).

PAINT YOUR WAGON.—This new American musical at Her Majesty's Theatre is a triumph for producer Jack Hylton, director Richard Bird, and for both Bobby Howes and his talented daughter, Sally Ann, seen here with Ken Cantril.

THE SHRIKE.—This gripping play, reviewed on the opposite page, was directed by its author, Joseph Kramm, and last year won the Pulitzer Prize in New York. Here are principals Sam Wanamaker and Constance Cummings in one of the play's many tense scenes.

THREE CURRENT PRODUCTIONS

Left:
MEDITERRANÉE—
Raoul Dufy, *b.* 1877.

LA LECTURE—Pablo Picasso, *b.* 1881.

OFFICIER D'ARTILLERIE LEGÈRE
Géric

FRENCH

THERE is something to appeal to all taste in the fine exhibition of importa French Masters on view at the Marlboroug Gallery in Old Bond Street, until April 1 Many of the paintings have not previous been seen in this country, and they a arousing much interest. Probably hig lighting the display are the two Renoi The first, reproduced here (*bottom, righ* is an unfinished portrait of a girl, and is a obvious collector's piece. As can be se the portrait has a very sketchy quality, only the head is fully resolved, but the colo and texture of the dress are exquisite, a the overall effect one of exceptional fre ness. In strong contrast is his *La Coiff* which, executed in 1888, depicts t women in an interior which is descri with infinitely more care than the a normally used in his smaller works. T whole is brilliantly coloured and suprem well finished.

Of real moment, too, is Courbe reclining nude (*top, right*), widely c sidered to be the finest since Titian. T painting, which is dated 1858 and was last year's Cognacq sale, lacks the stoli which marks so much of this artist's wo and while the figure is firmly moul it has more softness and grace than t usual Courbet.

Right:
FEMME COUCHÉE—LE REPOS—Gustave Courbet, 1819-1877.

E LA GARDE IMPÉRIALE—Theodore
791-1824.

MASTERS

In light-hearted contrast is the insouciant quality of Dufy's gay and colourful *Mediterranée* (*top, left*). Géricault's water-colour of an officer of the Imperial Guard astride a galloping horse (*above*) is full of motion and exquisite in detail. *La Lecture* (*left*) is dated 1934, and is one of five striking Picassos in the exhibition. His *Scène de Brasserie de Paris*, dated 1905, is an interior in the typical French illustrative style of the period; it has an air of charm and simplicity not often found even in his earliest pictures and is much more reminiscent of Bonnard than of Picasso. *Nus*, painted in the same year, is a group of nude figures in gouache, surrounded by numerous notes in the artist's handwriting, which indicate that he had in mind a large painting that was never executed. The other two, dated 1938 and 1941, are examples of the relentlessly stylised designs by which Picasso is more generally known to-day.

Worthy of attention, too, are some early works of Utrillo, notably a rather sombre village church, and his more delicately treated many-windowed house; Puvis de Chavanne's well-known *Prodigal Son*; a sepia drawing by Guys, and Modigliani's portrait of his doctor—said to have been painted in settlement of an overdue bill for services rendered.

PORTRAIT DE JEUNE FEMME, ASSISE—Auguste Renoir, 1841-1919.

FEB. 10.—The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh dined with the President of the Royal Academy, Sir Gerald Kelly, at Burlington House. Afterwards they spent some time looking at the Exhibition of Dutch Paintings, several of which have been lent from the Royal collections at Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace.

FEB. 11.—The Queen and her Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, went to the christening of the baby daughter of Mr. John and Lady Margaret Colville at St. Peter's, Eaton Square. At one time Lady Margaret was a Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen then Princess Elizabeth.

FEB. 12.—Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother carefully examined [illegible] Scott's (*right*) certificate, held by the Matron, Miss Lavinia Y[illegible] she visited the Nurses' Home at Westminster Hospital, which supp[illegible] nursing staff during the illness of the late King George VI., for [illegible] formal prize-giving ceremony.

FEB. 13.—The Duke of Edinburgh sitting on the side of a D.U.K.W. took him from Mablethorpe to near-by Sutton-on-Sea, in Lincolnshire he made an extensive tour by air, land and water of the East Coast At the same time the Queen was visiting flood-stricken parts of the [illegible] Estuary.

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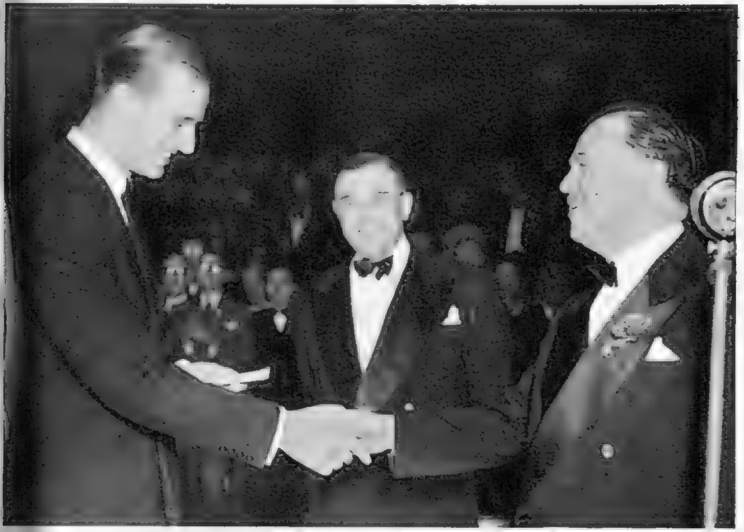
Occasions Froth

FEB. 11.—Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother was presented with a bouquet by David Littlestone when she attended a special performance of *Love from Judy*, at the Saville Theatre, in aid of the National Children's Adoption Association, of which her Majesty is patron.

FEB. 12.—The Duchess of Gloucester attended the world première of the Bomber Command film *Appointment in London*, at the Leicester Square Theatre. She was greeted by Lord De L'Isle and Dudley, Secretary of State for Air, and here five-year-old Remi Nass, son of Colonel Nass, the Netherlands Air Attaché, shyly presents her with a bouquet.



FEB. 12.—The Duke of Edinburgh went to the Royal Albert Hall for the Butlin Reunion, where Mr. W. E. Butlin presented him with a cheque for £7,000 for the National Playing Fields Association, of which the Duke is President. The money was contributed by Butlin holiday-campers during the 1952 season.

FEB. 13.—The Queen's charming smile of sympathy and encouragement brings a brief moment of happiness to flood victims at Belvedere, Kent, when her Majesty toured the flooded areas in Essex and Kent. Here she shakes hands with Mrs. J. Spauls, of Crabtree Manor Way, Belvedere, while admiring neighbours look on.

FEB. 14.—Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother travelled to Cambridge to see the work going on at two Women's Voluntary Service depots dealing with flood relief goods. She chatted with helpers and had a cup of tea.

FEB. 17.—The Queen with the Duke of Edinburgh went to the wedding at Queen's Chapel, Marlborough Gate, of her Lady-in-Waiting, Lady Palmer, widow of Sir Anthony Palmer, to Mr. Alexander Abel Smith. Sir Henry Abel Smith (*right*) was best man. The children are, *left*, Sir Charles Palmer and Antonia Palmer; *right*, David and Carolyn Abel Smith.

the Royal Diary

Photographed by Houston Rogers.

CORONATION YEAR DÉBUTANTE

Miss Ann Rhodes, who will be eighteen next July, has recently returned to London from a finishing school in Paris and is now embarking on a secretarial course, to be followed by a business training at a West End florist's prior to taking over a flower shop of her own in Beauchamp Place, Knightsbridge, which her parents, Sir John and Lady Rhodes, have opened for her as a practical coming-out gift.

FEB. 8—CHRISTENING IN KENT. The baby son of Lord and Lady Roderic Pratt was christened Adrian John Charles at Bayham Abbey Church. Lord Roderic Pratt is the brother of the Marquess Camden.

FEB. 10.—AFTER THE INVESTITURE. Sir Bruce Wycherly leaving the Palace with Lady Wycherly and his daughter Miss Jean Wycherly after receiving his knighthood from her Majesty the Queen.

FEB. 10.—ALSO AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE. Sir Hugh Ellis-Rees, of the Foreign Office, who received the K.C.M.G. at this first Coronation Year Investiture, with his wife.

FEB. 10.—PLENTY OF ATTENDANTS. Miss Rose Grimston, elder daughter of Sir Robert and Lady Grimston, had eight bridesmaids and two pages when she married Mr. Edward Underdown, film actor and amateur jockey, at St. Albans.

FEB. 13.—IN THE STALLS. Senora Gracie, wife of the Brazilian Ambassador to London, took her two daughters, Elizabeth and Veronica, to the crowded first night of *The Shrike* at the Princes Theatre.

Notes and Pictures from

Our Social Diary

FANCY-DRESS dances have been cropping up all round since we last wrote, and at each successive affair costumes seemed to become progressively more out of the ordinary.

JAN. 28.—The usual twittering which is part of so many big dances was all the more realistic at the Golden Cage Ball in aid of Girls' Clubs and Mixed Clubs when most of the women came in exotic feather head-dresses which, together with brilliantly-coloured dresses, made the ballroom at the Dorchester look like a tropical aviary. Mrs. Gerald Legge, who had put in a great deal of time and energy as organiser of the ball, had a halo of silver swallows cunningly balanced on her hair. Miss Fiona Campbell-Walter, not a bit disguised by a black mask, won a prize for her elegant concoction of egret plumes and a coronet; so did Mrs. Robin Wilson with amusing black feathers fingering her eyes. The gay-young-about-town turned up in force, including Mr. Michael Naylor-Leyland and his pretty fiancée, Miss Jacqueline Floor, Mr. Robin Mirrlees, Lord Porchester, who was brave enough to assist the cabaret with a serenade in French; Lord Carnegie and Miss Sally Churchill, sporting a white feather bird-cage complete with bird. The only man who dared compete with such gorgeous plumage had a sober-looking cock pheasant drooping doubtfully over his head!

JAN. 30.—More remarkable costumes and their wearers arrived for a dance at the Hop Pole Hotel at Tewkesbury, down in Gloucestershire, where no one not in fancy-dress was allowed in. The most original, and certainly the most ghoulish, was Dr. J. D. Wilkinson dressed as "the patient that got away"; a solemn-looking lion (Mr. D. Ritson) escorted a cheerful unicorn (Miss P. Twiss). Mr. and Mrs. Norman Parkinson were a decorous Victorian couple in strictly Victorian night attire, and Mr. S. Dyson came as a highwayman. Alderman and Mrs. T. G. Bannister, Mayor and Mayoress of Tewkesbury, found the judging a difficult business.

FEB. 2.—Even stranger costumes made us feel as if we were walking through the native quarter of some forbidden city as we pushed our way among scores of people in curious get-ups who flocked to the

[Continued overleaf.

FEB. 14.—FROM AEROPLANE TO HORSE. Lord Burghley, retiring Master of the East Sussex Foxhounds, had flown back from Switzerland only just in time for this meet at Sidley Green, Bexhill. Pictured with him is Miss Sheila Cowen, the twenty-year-old whipper-in to the East Sussex.

FEB. 14.—WHERE THE SEA NOW RULES. Queen Juliana of the Netherlands stood on the end of a dyke of the *De Eendracht* polder when she inspected the damage on the flood-stricken island of Texel. Seen in the background is the huge gap punched in the dyke by the devastating tidal waves.

FEB. 16.—NEW SHIP GETS A GOOD SEND-OFF. Mrs. Winston Churchill was escorted by Sir Ronald Weeks when she launched the new light fleet carrier H.M.S. *Hermes*, the most modern carrier in the world, at the Barrow-in-Furness yard of Vickers-Armstrong.

FEB. 16.—*TRÈS CHIC.* Mme. Massigli, wife of the French Ambassador, wearing lots of pearls and a white beret, sat between Sir Richard Burbidge (*right*) and M. Christian Dior at a spring fashion display of Dior creations held at Harrods' new fashion theatre.

Vic-Wells Coronation costume ball at the Lyceum—all soft plush, weird lights and musky atmosphere. Mr. Oliver Messel, Mr. Frederick Ashton, Kay Hammond and John Clements were some of the costume judges. Mr. John Whibley and his wife, very sinister and sparkly as King and Queen of the Night, won a prize; a more down-to-earth character was the "terror of St. Trinian's," somewhat anxiously watched over by Mr. Ronald Searle and his wife. Those who didn't feel equal to quick-stepping round the packed floor found a good view of the glittering scene from the balcony. A party who came as themselves were Miss Elizabeth Broom, Mr. John Dexter, Miss Heather Broom and Lieutenant Barnes, R.N., on leave from Portsmouth; two others, Miss Anita Morris and Mr. Robin Saunders, were also not in fancy-dress. Hermione Gingold, looking particularly evil in black and purple as the Queen of Doom, kept a malignant eye on the whole proceedings.

FEB. 5.—Ireland's *An Tostal*, which will last for three weeks from April 5, promises to be a special treat—plays, parades, pageants, sport—in fact, everything laid on with a specially national flavour to give those who go to see Ireland "at home" a really good time. Major-General Hugo McNeill is the general organiser, and as a preface to these celebrations, four pretty Irish harpists, plus harps, in voluminous emerald robes were the main attraction at a morning party when people were told all about *An Tostal*. There were nips of Gaelic coffee for all—a deliciously warming mixture of strong black coffee soothed with a shot of Irish whiskey. But apparently even celestial instruments are not exempt from the Customs, for on the way over, seventeen-year-old Kathleen Watkins had the sound-box of her harp searched for possible nylons!

Our Socia

FEB. 7.—From Ireland itself came news of racing at Leopardstow where there was great excitement when Mr. J. A. Wood's *Lucky Do* an Irish Aintree hope, snatched a three-lengths victory from Mr. de Pret Roose's *Free Lancer* in the £1000 Leopardstown 'Chase, t main race of the day. People came from all over the place for t meeting; from Northern Ireland were Sir George Clarke and his attract blonde wife in tweeds; and Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. Roly Byers, who soon moving into their new house at Glonsilla. From the West ca Mrs. Geoffrey Palmer, chatting to Lord Glenavy, and the Southe contingent included Sir Thomas and Lady Ainsworth, cosy in a bea jacket, and Mr. and Mrs. Pat Grey, whose horse came in third in maiden race. Others about were Sir Basil Goulding, whose wife wa mink and bottle-green; Lord Hemphill, Colonel Denis Daly, just off India on holiday; Lord Willoughby de Broke, and Mrs. Freema Jackson, whose husband, Captain Freeman-Jackson, was going round crutches with a leg in plaster; he said he hoped to be fit enough to ri for Ireland in the Three Day Event at Badminton in April.

FEB. 9.—A bridge for the Travellers—not the Bridge of Sighs, but som thing very nearly as romantic—for the Travellers are building a brid

FEB. 14.—THE ROAD TO THE ISLES. Over 1000 guests were at the wedding of Miss Wytchy Macdonald, elder daughter of the late Colonel Kenneth Macdonald and Mrs. Macdonald, of Skeabost Bridge, Isle of Skye, and Major C. A. Cameron, youngest son of the late Sir Donald Cameron and of Lady Hermione Cameron, at St. Cumin's, Morar.

FEB. 14.—ROMANCE IN NORWAY. Princess Ragnhild, the elder daughter of Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Maertha of Norway, announced her engagement to Hr. Erling Lorentzen, a member of a prominent ship-owning family in Norway.

FEB. 16.—PARIS WEDDING. Leaving the Protestant Church after their marriage are Lieutenant James Millington-Drake, Royal Navy, eldest son of Sir Eugen Millington-Drake, the former diplomat, and Miss Manon Redvers-Bate, from Perth, Australia. The couple met in Malta a year ago.

FEB. 17.—ALL FOR A GOLDEN GUINEA. Brian Griffiths, winner of the traditional Pancake Day scramble at Westminster School, holds the pancake he succeeded in retrieving from the scrum in one hand, and his golden guinea in the other. He belongs to Busby House, which has won the event six times.

Diary (contd.)

from their ballroom over the area and into the garden behind Pall Mall, which has been lent to them by the Crown Estate Paving Commission specially for the Coronation Ball on June 11. What with the special dance floor being laid in the Smoking Room and the bridge, the Travellers are certainly staging their first ball in the Club's history in a way worthy of Coronation celebration. But members had better hurry for their tickets—they are 5 gns. each up to March 1; after that they will be 6 gns. Chairman for the Ball is to be Mr. Richard Dudley Ryder, nephew of the Earl of Harrowby—and among those on the committee are Mme. Massigli, wife of the French Ambassador, and the Countess of Rothes, the wife of the Travellers' Club chairman.

FEB. 11.—Mrs. Anthony Eden looked gay and charming when she received the guests at the Conservative Winter Ball at the Dorchester. It might almost have been a special Highland do, there were so many Eightsome Reels, Petronells and Gay Gordons which were splendid for warming up everybody. Stripping the Willow with great gusto was Mr. John Wauchope, who seemed very expert at all these Scottish dances. Lady Elizabeth Lindsay-Bethune, daughter of the Earl and Countess of Lindsay, who were also there, came with Mr. Robin Hill; Miss Meribah Baxter, daughter of Mr. Beverley Baxter, wore pretty gold sandals with a short evening dress. Other staunch Tory supporters of a slightly older generation were Sir David and Lady Maxwell Fyfe, Lord and Lady Davidson, Lord De L'Isle and Dudley, Lady (Elena) Bennett, who was chairman of the ball, Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Butler, and lots more besides. Three more younger ones enjoying the fun were Mr. Martin Stevens, Miss Maureen O'Brien and Mr. Patrick Marlowe. The latter's sister, Miss *Carola* (not Pixie, friends please note) Marlowe, in black with a twinkling tiara, and her partner, Mr. Morgan Drummond, were so hot by the end that they decided to go for a swim at the International Sportsmen's Club, but, of course, found it locked up. Swimmers at 3 a.m. are not expected in February!

FEB. 12.—In spite of the slush and snow, lots of half-frozen sightseers were milling outside the Leicester Square Theatre to watch the Duchess of Gloucester arrive for the première of *Appointment in London*, the Bomber Command film. Marshal of the R.A.F. Lord Tedder, Lady Tedder and Lord De L'Isle and Dudley, Secretary of State for Air, received the Duchess, who was greeted with an impressive fanfare from the R.A.F. band. She shook hands with Wing Commander Learoyd, V.C.; other last-war V.C.s looking on with their wives were Wing Commander Edwards, Squadron Leader Trent, Flight Lieut. Reid and Warrant Officer Jackson. Dame Felicity Peake came with her husband; Air Chief Marshal Sir William and Lady Dickson, Dame Katherine Trefusis Forbes, and Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill were a few more of the many V.I.P.s there.

SPORTING BACKGROUND

by Louis T. Stanley

One Man's Fish . . . !

Dr. Johnson was never at a loss for words. He took the line that every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. He attacked with gusto. Although criticism may be a study by which men grow important and formidable at very small expense, the worthy Doctor's comments invariably had a core of truth. Sport did not escape his notice. Many would agree, for instance, with his evaluation of angling when he said that a fishing-rod is a stick with a hook at one end and a fool at the other. Personally I prefer a slight modification. I regard fishing as a delusion entirely surrounded by liars in old clothes. Still, live and let live . . . one man's fish is another man's *poisson* . . . and we have reached the time of year when the salmon-fisher is coming into his own.

The faint promise of spring is stirring. The northern rivers will soon be right. The uplands may be snow-tipped, but the fields are active with ploughing and sowing. Rooks are strident. The plaintive cry of the whaup is heard. I may be cynical about certain types of fishermen, but the prospect of hooking a lively ten-pounder is stimulating. The first few casts are always as awkward as the first few shots in an early game of golf in a new season. Winter inactivity dulls the touch. But it is not long before a long line is sent across and down the river. There is no doubt about the first fish to be hooked . . . here is no sluggish salmon of late autumn, but an electrified springer. The season has not opened until the ghillie has used gaff or net to effect.

Many anglers are lulling themselves to sleep with the thought of landing a salmon that will break all records. If such be the case, it is just as well to know what has to be beaten. There was the Earl of Home's 69½-pounder caught in the Tweed in 1730, although I have doubts about the authenticity of the claim. If scepticism rejects that fish, there was the 64-pounder landed by Miss G. W. Ballantine in the Tay in 1922 after a comparatively short tussle lasting two hours. As far as I know, the biggest known salmon was the Wye fish which measured 59½ ins. long, by 33¼ ins., and weighed 80 lb.; while the heaviest salmon on record was one of 103 lb. which was caught in nets near the Forth in 1922.

The platitude that every pool holds a fish will soon be proved wrong, but to forestall any suggestion of defeatism I recall that this time last year a twelve-mile stretch of the Tweed gave twenty-five crews a catch of 1500 salmon in one day. Angling may be a rustic employment calling for a piece of string and a bent-pin mentality, but salmon fishing has been labelled aptly and justly the deer-stalking of the stream.

Boat Race Preparations

The preparation for the Boat Race is a serious business. In many ways the event is a paradox. It attracts the largest sporting crowd of the year, yet only a minute fraction appreciate the finer points of what they see. Many have grave misgivings as to what constitutes a sliding-seat, yet for weeks beforehand columns in the sporting Press dole out bulletins of the progress made by the crews, views that are read with avidity by people who have never handled an oar in their lives. When the day of the race dawns, the physical likenesses and idiosyncrasies of the crews will be common knowledge, likewise the length and cost of the boat. In the meantime there is a long way to go. So far I have only watched the initial sifting out of the possible Cambridge material. There is plenty of room for improvement. The rating and cover seldom rise to what might be expected. A weakness readily apparent is the tendency at the end of the stroke to feather their blades before leaving the water through failing to drop their hands before turning the wrists. One result of this weakness is a loss of solidarity at the finish. It is still early to pass serious criticism, but now that the final crew has been chosen, it is reasonable to expect marked improvement and the disappearance of the disturbing lack of life. Even allowing for the emergence of something like University form, I doubt whether either "place" will produce a great crew. The standard is below that of recent years. Oxford will probably be favourites in early betting, but form can be unpredictable in the Boat Race.

Last year Cambridge had the more experienced crew. When they reached the Tideway the odds were strongly in their favour.

The Warwickshire Hunt met recently at Arlescote House, near Banbury, the Elizabethan home of Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Chapman. Charles I., as Prince Charles at the age of twelve, signed his name with a diamond ring on one of the leaded lights there. Lord Bearsted, M.F.H., is in the centre of the picture with the hounds.

Then came an unexpected deterioration, whilst the Dark Blues suddenly improved out of all recognition. When both crews eventually came to the stake-boats, the betting was even money. I remember the appalling weather as if it were but yesterday. Blinding snow interspersed with hailstones kept thousands off the river banks. A fierce wind blew from the Middlesex side. The water was rough. Cambridge won the toss, chose the Middlesex side, and went away to a half-length lead in the second minute. At the mile (4 mins. 21 secs.) the advantage had become three-quarters of a length. By Chiswick Steps the rôles were reversed. Oxford were a few feet in front in 12 mins. 40 secs. Duke's Meadows saw the crews level. Barnes Bridge saw Cambridge a quarter of a length in front. At that point the Dark Blues made their supreme effort. Cambridge had virtually rowed themselves out. The reserve so essential was not there. Oxford gained by inches. At Mortlake Brewery they were level. The Oxford stroke, Christopher Davidge, called for a final spurt. His crew responded nobly. The flag fell, giving Oxford a well-earned victory by a canvas in 20 mins. 23 secs., after one of the most exciting races in the history of the event. Throughout the entire course of 4¼ miles between Putney and Mortlake the crews had never parted company. It will be interesting to see what this year produces. For the benefit of those who are statistically minded, Cambridge have won 53, Oxford 44, with one dead-heat out of the 98 races. Oxford have the dismal record of only five wins in the last thirty-one years.

Return of an American Champion

I was glad to hear that the powerful American golfer, Frank Stranahan, will be making another trip to Britain for our national golf championships. He is a colourful and controversial figure. Here is a young man with the self-assurance of a veteran sauntering with supreme indifference through life with a golf-club in his hand. Like Mr. Pitt, he takes the line: "The atrocious crime of being a young man I shall neither attempt to palliate nor deny." Stranahan does neither. He treats his youth and strength as talismans of success. There is nothing wrong in the attitude, only a few gentlemen, mindful perhaps that Bernard Shaw once dismissed every man over forty as a scoundrel, feel their imagined senility is likewise pitied, if not ignored, by this stripling who never tires. The complaint sounds trite, but it is very real to some people.

I have listened to harsh words about Stranahan. Those concerned felt strongly about their grievances. They overlooked the fact that youth is often unconsciously thoughtless. There may have been occasions when Stranahan has been outspoken. Why not? Before passing judgment I should insist on hearing both sides. A cynic once asked: "Do Englishmen only survive death?" A proviso might be added: "Are Englishmen never rude?" The reader is at liberty to provide his own answer to the question.

Few people in this country really know Stranahan. In moments of success he looks at you out of eyes bulging like those of a moth that has eaten too much flannel. What goes on behind those eye-sockets it is sometimes hard to say. I am certain it has changed since the first time he set foot on our soil. In a few years Stranahan has grown up. He has become matured, more tolerant, more likeable and amenable to reason.

I do not profess to understand his extraordinary devotion to the game. I have never seen any other man spend so many hours, day after day, hitting golf-balls into space. There is obviously some inner urge that will neither be satisfied nor stilled until the goal is reached. What that target is, only Stranahan can say. I have a feeling that Bobby Jones achieved what he would like to do, namely, win the four major golfing titles in the same season. This inspiration does not really concern us. That is his business as a golfer. In the same way that what the plumber thinks about is no business of ours until he translates it into terms of pipes, so Stranahan's golf only affects us on the course.

He is an extraordinary golfer to study and analyse. The swing has been so regimented that the mechanism borders upon that of an automaton. With the possible exception of Cotton and Rees, no golfer in these islands, amateur or professional, and few in America can equal his tournament experience. I like Stranahan. I admire his single-mindedness, although I cannot understand it. His success does not consist of the sum total of the number of shots he makes in a year, for, whatever the sage may have said, genius is never an affair of accountancy. It is a unique ability to concentrate on a subject to the exclusion of everything else.

X-Ray Eyes

A propos of my recent remarks on women, a gentle female reader from St. Leonards-on-Sea writes to me as follows: "Why do you mere males take such delight in attacking women? You are all a pack of cowards . . . pick on your own spineless sex. What about those revolting males in tights, with others in too-revealing bathing-suits which make our beaches and pools such a disgusting sight." I can only say that for a man to pretend to understand women is bad manners; for him really to understand them is bad morals. I content myself by congratulating this St. Leonards lady on being so observant!

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO . . .

SIR MALCOLM SARGENT : For laying down his baton for a friend !

On Friday, February 13, distinguished conductor Sir Malcolm Sargent temporarily abandoned his baton to appear as pianist with the New London Quartet at a Royal Festival Hall concert. *L. to r.*: Douglas Cameron, old friend of Sir Malcolm's and leader of the Quartet ('cello), Lionel Bentley (violin), Erich Gruenberg (violin) and Keith Cummings (viola).

LORD BRABAZON OF TARA : For taking the Cresta at 60—at 69 !

We salute the indefatigable Lord Brabazon, who has once again won the Seniors' Cup on the Cresta Run at St. Moritz. A keen golfer, yachtsman and chess-player, he also holds the first-ever pilot's licence issued in Britain.

MR. H. C. RAY : For pointing a way to "illuminated indication" !

A "bright light" of the Inventors Club is Mr. H. C. Ray, of Wood Green, who has invented a very useful torch which enables motorists and handymen to look for faults while retaining the use of both hands.

LORD DE L'ISLE AND DUDLEY : For refusing to be a stick-in-the-mud !

When, on a tour of inspection of the Canvey Island sea walls, Air Minister Lord de L'Isle and Dudley found he could not pull his gumboots clear of the mud, he calmly pulled his white-stockinged feet free and stood in his socks until the R.A.F. officers pulled out his boots.

MISS JEAN WESTWOOD and MR. LAWRENCE DEMMY : For skating off with a championship.

At Davos, Switzerland, the camera catches this young British couple in a dramatic climax to their winning display in the World Ice Dancing Championship. British pairs also won second and fourth places; an American pair took third place.

CAPTAIN DONALD SORRELL : For berthing the *Queen Mary* with "a piece of wood and a few screws."

At New York, quiet, phlegmatic Captain Sorrell was told the *Queen Mary* could not be docked as the tugmen were on strike. Undaunted, he manœuvred her in under her own steam with a home-made geometrical contrivance of wood and screws.

★ AT THE CINEMA ★

with C. A. LEJEUNE

The Little World of Don Camillo

(Rialto and La Continentale)

THE *Little World of Don Camillo*—shown in a French version at the Rialto, and an Italian one at La Continentale—is a great-hearted, sweet-natured, and very, very funny film ; made by a Franco-Italian company in Italy, with the French comedian Fernandel and the Italian actor Gino Cervi in the leading parts.

As adapted by director Julien Duvivier from Giovannino Guareschi's best-selling story, it recounts a series of incidents in the long-standing feud between a militant priest and a Communist mayor in a village in the North of Italy. Their differences of belief run deep, and neither party is in the least averse to submitting his principles to the test of ordeal by combat.

Don Camillo and Mayor Peppone dispute, in no gentle terms, over such things as the opening of a community centre, the milking of cows during an agricultural strike, the conduct of a football match between comrades and parishioners (in which both sides bribe the referee quite shamelessly) and the sort of names proper to a Christian baptism. Since Don Camillo is a man of the people, who finds it hard not to let his muscular side get the better of his spiritual side, they even come to blows ; and one of the most telling incidents in the picture is an off-screen encounter between these two strong men in the church belfry, with the bells giving a running commentary on their punches.

But the beauty of *The Little World of Don Camillo* is that there is no malice in this antagonism. When it comes to a crisis, priest and Communist—although they may glance sideways at each other in what could be described as an old-fashioned way—roll up their sleeves and work together. Cheerfulness keeps breaking in ; and, with cheerfulness, profound humanity.

M. Duvivier has tilted his film throughout towards comedy ; whether it be the riotously slapstick comedy of the football match, or the gentle comedy of the priest's relations with his Superior. When Don Camillo, aching to go out and lambast his opponent, communes with the figure of Christ on the Cross, nothing seems offensive in the familiar exchange of words, since it is his own conscience the priest is clearly talking to. "But, Lord," objects Don Camillo, aghast at the idea of christening a baby Lenin, "baptism's a serious matter." "I know," replies the Voice in the church, but very gently : "I originated it."—"Call him off, Lord," whispers Don Camillo, harassed by a mongrel yapping round his heels, as he stumbles with the heavy crucifix to the festival of the blessing of the river. "Why should I ?" comes the Answer. "Leave him alone. Now nobody can say that not even a dog came with you."

Nothing could be more reverent than the way in which these conversations are presented, and the whole film strikes me as a small miracle ; not only in its innocence of offence, but in its unstrained acceptance of the good and gay and common sides of human nature. It has long been argued that people can't talk about religion or politics for five minutes without growing bitter. Well, here is a rebuttal. For nearly two hours *The Little World of Don Camillo* talks about little else but religion and politics ; without any bitterness at all.

Appointment in London

(Leicester Square)

THE appointment of the title is an investiture at Buckingham Palace, to which the Wing-Commander hero, an Australian pilot, and the widow of another pilot, are bound at the end of the picture. The work is dedicated to all those British airmen who were unable, poor lads, to keep their appointment in London, and I think it is to their wartime comrades that this story of a bomber station in 1943 will have its strongest appeal.

To them there will be something almost nostalgic about the scenes in mess and briefing-room and hangar ; in the R.A.F. slang and the R.A.F. technicalities ; in the nightly scramble and the receding lights of the flare-path ; in the rendezvous with the main bomber stream heading towards Germany.

As far as a mere civilian can judge, the final all-out attack on a secret-weapon target, into a hell of flak and a blaze of searchlights, with "very heavy enemy fighter opposition developing," is one of the most realistic and hair-raising aerial combats ever staged in pictures ; and one can imagine the memories that must crowd back on veterans in the audience as they listen to the crisp messages on the radio—"Master bomber calling deputy—your B route markers are accurate" ; "Master bomber calling main force—bomb on the green—you 're bombing short—aim on the green."

Appointment in London seems mainly built up for this spectacular climax. Its story is of the slightest. It concerns the determination of Wing-Commander Dirk Bogarde to complete ninety missions before he is grounded, and the equal determination of Group-Captain Ian Hunter, who sees that he is on the brink of nervous collapse, not to let him. But when the Wing-Commander, with his score standing at eighty-nine sorties, is forbidden to undertake the ninetieth ; and when, in addition, he finds that a panic whisper is going round the station that there is a "jinx" on the squadron, he disobeys orders just like any Hollywood hero ; and it is he who ensures the success of the mission by taking over control when both the Master Bomber and his deputy have been shot down.

Dirk Bogarde does a nice job with a part that calls for toughness as well as sensibility in playing ; and it is pleasant to see William Sylvester, the American stage actor who made his British film début as the villain in *The Yellow Balloon*, allowing his rugged face to go all friendly and humorous, as a U.S. liaison officer with the British Air Force, whose job is *supposed* to be "strictly non-operational." The ladies in the plot, I feel, are just a bit superfluous ; but within the limits of her part (a widowed Wren Intelligence Officer) Dinah Sheridan does all that can be done with a sketchy character, and does it well.

Le Plaisir

(Studio One)

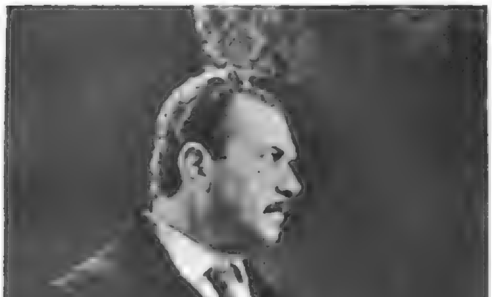
PRODUCER-DIRECTOR Max Ophuls, who made *La Ronde*, seems all set for another international success with *Le Plaisir* ; whether for the right reasons or the wrong ones it is not our province to determine. There are plenty of right reasons for adult and intelligent audiences to enjoy this X Certificate film ; and I am inclined to think that the people who go to it, looking for elegance and style, a beautiful mingling of the ironic and the tender, and that peculiar delicacy with which Ophuls touches even the most indelicate situations, will be more thoroughly rewarded than those who go to it seeking for sauciness.

Le Plaisir is a film contrived from three short stories by Guy de Maupassant ; *Le Masque*, *La Maison Tellier* and *Le Modèle* ; the idea being, presumably, to comment on pleasure in its various forms. The first and third incidents are short and slight. *Le Masque* is a macabre little piece, as shuddersome as a bit of Grand Guignol, about an old man whose passion for women and passing pleasure is so insatiable that he puts on a young man's handsome mask, and dances galvanically until he drops. A story which might have been altogether ugly and ruthless is softened by the beautifully understanding performance of Gaby Morlay as the old man's wife. *Le Modèle* describes the growing boredom of a painter with the model and mistress whose inspiration alone makes his pictures sell. As a story, it seems truncated, but the charm of Simone Simon makes it vivid while it lasts.

The *pièce de résistance* is the middle tale, *La Maison Tellier*. On the screen, as in the book, this turns out to be a miniature masterpiece. La Maison Tellier is a high-class brothel in a provincial town, and the story describes the dreadful night when the clients, from the Mayor to the tax-collector, arrive to find the door locked and bolted ; Madame and her Young Ladies gone to a neighbouring country village, to lend tone to Madame's niece's First Communion ; and not a spark burning in the Welcome Lamp.

Shoulders hunched, drooping backs presented to the audience, the gentlemen sit in a sad half-circle, looking out at a dreary sea ; while the Young Ladies, not so many miles away, are tossing and turning in their lonely beds, unable to sleep and overawed by the starry silence of the night. The simple beauty and purity of the ceremony next day reduces these Mesdemoiselles to tears ; an emotional interlude which does nothing to check the resumption of the high-spirited routine at the brothel next night.

This tricky adventure is flawlessly played by a cast which includes Danielle Darrieux, Madeleine Renaud and Jean Gabin, and is subtly guided by Peter Ustinov's commentary in broken English (as if this were a foreign conception which he 'd try to explain to us if he could). To look for the wickedness in it seems to me quite wicked. The presentation is charming, the grace unstrained, and the surface frolic covers an understanding of human nature that goes very deep.



THE LITTLE WORLD OF DON CAMILLO.—Antagonists most of the time, Don Camillo (*right*) and Mayor Peppone (*left*) nevertheless join forces when it comes to a real crisis.

THE DREAM . . .

In René Clair's hilariously funny film, *Les Belles de Nuit*, Claude (Gérard Philipe) finds life to-day a miserable affair and takes refuge in glorious dreams of past and gayer centuries. Only in these is he happy, for then he is always the hero to lovely Gina Lollobrigida, Martine Carol and Magali Vendeuil—the girl he loves in real life. It's a French fantasy with a typically French fairy-tale ending. The film is expected to be released in this country during the next three months.

. . . and THE REALITY

Happily prepared to enter into the spirit of the occasion are this group of guests in fancy dress at historic Hartland Abbey, during the Taw and Torridge Festival inaugural ball.

Hostess the Hon. Mrs. Sheila Stucley, charming wife of Major Denis Stucley, finds Mr. Sebright's conversation highly amusing. In the background, the Countess of Harewood chats with a guest

TAW AND TORRIDGE

On February 2, the inaugural ball for North Devon's Coronation Year Festival of the Arts was held at Hartland Abbey. This lovely old place, which dates back to the eleventh century and is the home of Major Denis Stucl y [illegible] son of landowner Sir Hugh Stucley) and his [illegible] the Hon. Mrs. Sheila Stucley, made a wonderf[illegible] background for this very gay and memorable occasion. The Taw and Torridge Festival, which derives its name from the two rivers which [illegible] respectively through Barnstaple and Bideford t[illegible] a common estuary near Westward Ho!, will be celebrated from July 11 to 19. President of the Festival is the Earl Fortescue; the Earl of

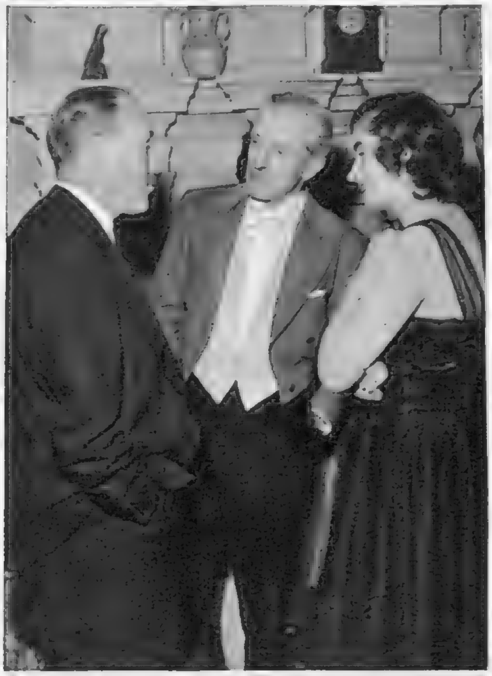
Specially photographed [illegible]

It looks like a good story! The Earl of Harewood, one of the patrons of the Taw and Torridge Festival, and the Mayor of Bideford, Mrs. R. H. Cox, dressed as Queen Elizabeth, are obviously greatly amused at the discourse of Mr. Basil Douglas, Artistic Director of the Festival.

Discussing the ball are the popular chairma[illegible] the Torrington Farmers' Hunt Comm[illegible] Colonel R. D. D. Birdwood, and his charming [illegible]

Relaxing after the dancing are Mrs. R. Watson, Mr. C. Mugford, with the artist's bow and corduroy coat, Mr. J. Jefferey as Lieutenant Pinkerton, and Mrs. J. Jefferey as Madam Butterfly.

Making a very attractive group in the delightful costumes of the Louis XVth period are, *l. to r.:* Mrs. Elizabeth Scrutton, Mr. Phillip Scrutton, Mrs. Audrey Dubeny and Mr. Ralph Dubeny.



The forthcoming Taw and Torridge Festival was the main topic of conversation with everyone. Chatting here are, *l. to r.:* Mr. J. A. P. Martin, Col. F. E. A. Fulford, and attractive Mrs. Fulford.

CORONATION BALL

Harewood, Lord Poltimore and the Countess of Eldon are its patrons, and the artistic direction is in the very able hands of the English Opera Group.

Guests of Honour at the ball at Hartland Abbey were the Earl and Countess of Harewood, who had the difficult experience of having to judge the infinite variety of really excellent costumes, followed by the more enjoyable task of presenting the prizes to the winners. The ball was well organised, perfectly conducted and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Everyone agreed that such a smooth-running start augurs very well for the Festival itself, and we join their many well-wishers in hoping the organisers' efforts will be crowned with the success they deserve.

"THE SKETCH" by Chris Ware.

Dr. W. K. Somerton, as a Cossack, and Mrs. Somerton, as a milkmaid, are complimented on their costumes by their hostess.

A happy picture of the lovely young Countess of Harewood presenting a prize to Mr. J. Stevens-Guille, who looks highly realistic in his costume of an Arab sheikh. On the left is Mr. Basil Douglas, and behind the Countess, Mr. Tommy Kinsman, the band leader.

TALKING OF TELEVISION

By CYRIL BUTCHER

OUR SLAVE—THE VALVE

ALL *you* have to do is to switch on. A click as you turn the knob, a pause while the set warms up, and then there it is, the television picture glowing on your screen. It all seems so very simple.

And yet the act of switching on has set into action a series of electronic functions which are, to the lay, or even semi-scientific mind, no less than miraculous. In some sets, no fewer than twenty radio valves begin to busy themselves with their several duties of detection, amplification and control (working happily in limits of micro-seconds and micro-inches). We of the knob-turning laity are not nearly conscious or appreciative enough of the wonder of that demure little glass bulb known as the radio valve, quietly going about its business.

Yet from the moment in which Edison became worried over the carbon deposit which appeared at the end of his newly invented electric-light bulbs, after they had been burning for some time, a new era was born, Edison's discovery that a heated filament, in a vacuum, emits a stream of electrons was destined to revolutionise science and society. We do not propose to fill up the rest of this issue with a list of all the various functions of the radio valve. Let us confine ourselves to assuming that without it daily life would not be as safe, convenient, interesting or amusing. It has conquered space and time; it has replaced physical effort in hundreds of ways. You can telephone across the world, you can hear a concert on your radio even before the sound of the music has reached the back of the hall, and you can make involved calculations in a matter of seconds which would take months by ordinary means; all with the aid of man's newest and most obedient slave.

These thoughts took root in our mind shortly after seeing a short documentary film made by Mullard, describing the process of manufacturing their valves and cathode-ray tubes. We suggest to the B.B.C. that they might well show an edited version of this film (minus advertising propaganda) one of these evenings. Viewers could then see for themselves some of the care and intricate workmanship that are involved in the provision of their entertainment. One sequence which they would find most exciting is the making of the tungsten wire for the valve filaments. This starts its career as a pile of powder and ends as a thread 3/10,000th inch thick—a tenth of the diameter of a human hair!

Now let us see what all these radio valves have been uttering between them. (Incidentally, they come in all sizes—for their different functions—from the tiny, thimble-size variety for hearing-aids, etc., to the transmitting station monsters which are so big and generate so much heat that the water-circulating system employed to keep them at a safe temperature also provides the heating for the buildings which house them!) What have the wild television waves been saying lately?

Our own viewing has been on the scrappy side during the past weeks for, thanks to *The Sketch* indulging in some well-earned Diamond Jubilation—going back to the time when television was "a thing to pooh-pooh, tra-la"—we have managed to sneak a rest from our set. That, by the way, is a course we recommend to all viewers. Television is yours to command, at the turn of a switch. Why become its slave?

Quite the most-discussed programme for many months was *Our Marie*, ostensibly in the *Passing Show* series. But as this series has become so irregular and problematical, let us consider *Our Marie* on its own considerable merits.

For a start, it was a stupendous triumph for Pat Kirkwood, in the part of Marie Lloyd, the Queen of the Music Hall, round whom the programme was devised. It is the tragedy of all who represent past actual characters that they can never be greater than their subjects. So Miss Kirkwood's triumph was only limited by the simple fact that she was not actually Marie Lloyd. Had she created some entirely fictitious character, hers might have been recorded as one of the great performances of the era. We still think it was that, if only for the selfless way Miss Kirkwood showed how wonderful Miss Lloyd was, instead of demonstrating how clever Miss Kirkwood is. Another reason for our opinion is the sheer technical accomplishment of the performance. It is not difficult, with the aid of the artifices of make-up to age over a long period of years, visually. But Pat Kirkwood also aged vocally, from the unresonance of youth, through the "fruitiness" of maturity to the croak of Marie Lloyd's final performance at the age of fifty-two. And to keep all that in mind when you are making fifty changes

Pirmin Trecu, of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet Company, caught in a striking pose during his *variation* in a recent television performance of *Carnaval*.

of costume and singing song after song, is hideously difficult.

From the technical point of view, too, producer Michael Mills and his director, Peter Graham Scott, scored a great success, handling the hundred-odd scenes slickly and unfalteringly. But this is exactly where the rub lay. Over a hundred scenes in just over a hundred minutes! Some of them, of course, were merely flashes; while others lasted several minutes. But inevitably this multi-scenic format led to "bittiness" and slapdash story-telling, with little time left for character-drawing.

At the end of this long programme one was left very little wiser about the real character of Marie Lloyd. She had three unsuccessful marriages. Why? The authors, Alfred Shaughnessy and Christopher Barry, instead of telling us, had the nerve to ask that question themselves when they gave Marie the line: "Was it all my fault?" They also tried to cram far too much into their script; they fell into the common error of dramatic biography in that they took their heroine from the age of fifteen to her death. It is too long a period, and it can't all be dramatic. Much better to have stuck to a limited number of episodes and developed them thoroughly, showing a reason for what happened. There would have been plenty of "cues for song" without indulging in a headlong, skimpy rush through the years. As it was, the whole thing appeared slipshod—and we are sure Marie Lloyd never was that.

During this period we saw three very enjoyable ballet performances. We are glad to note that this type of programme is on the increase, for it falls most happily within the television medium. The ear is gently pleased with the music and the eye is gratified by the generally definite choreographic lines and patterns made by the dancers. The first was a visit by the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet with one of the items from their repertoire: *Carnaval*, to Schumann's music and Fokine's choreography. The main rôle, Harlequin, was superbly danced by Pirmin Trecu, who has now earned his place among the first few British male dancers. Columbine was Elaine Fifield, enchanting as ever. But she would be even more enchanting if she would only pay more attention to her *port de bras*. One sometimes gets the impression that her arms and hands belong to somebody else. David Poole, a fine mime, was a heart-breaking Pierrot.

A few days later there was another in the *Ballet for Beginners* series, featuring the work of Walter Gore. Mr. Gore is one of the most unique characters in the ballet world. He combines whimsicality with virility, acute sensitivity with maddening obstinacy, and great personal charm with no inconsiderable temper. All this can be detected in his work, which accordingly becomes increasingly intriguing. Moreover, he has two technical qualities which other choreographers might well take to heart: a concentration of clear, definite floor-patterns and a complete absorption in the music. In this programme he danced in excerpts from his own works and was gloriously partnered by exciting Paula Hinton.

The third ballet venture came after a harmless American comedy called *The Hero*, about small-town goings-on, by Irwin Lewis, nicely produced by Douglas Allen and featuring George Coulouris, Bessie Love and an excellent boy actor, Colin Campbell. The ballet was an interpretation of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* overture. Vic Oliver and the British Concert Orchestra (looking as if they hated every minute of it) provided the music, and Michel de Lutry was responsible for the very satisfying choreography. Don Gillies and Dominic Callaghan were a charming pair of "star-crossed lovers"; in fact, the whole thing would have been most pleasurable had it not been for Mr. Oliver's laboured introductory lecture about the music. While not quite descending to kiddie-talk, this was roughly at the intellectual level of Andy Pandy.

Watching Brief

CONTINUING the terpsichorean theme, there is a further *Ballet for Beginners* programme on March 2. This will concentrate on the work of Anthony Tudor, the choreographer, who began his career under Marie Rambert and has since transferred his activities to America.

* * *

The Dark Wood is a new play by Philip Burton, and will be presented on March 1 and [illegible] by the Jan Atkins-Alan Bromley team. It deals with the spiritual struggle of a young evangelist played by David Peel. With him in the cast are Rachel Gurney and David Markham.

* * *

The sinister subject of foot-and-mouth disease is the subject of Robert Barr's new documentary, *Outbreak*, on March 3. It will contain a dramatic theme in addition to the alarming facts and figures.

Doubtless you will be making every possible use of your television set during the Coronation ceremonies—but the Blind will never see those thrilling sights. The National Institute for the Blind, 224, Great Portland Street, W.1, have a scheme to help the Blind through all those people who will be having parties round their sets. Why not write for details?

OUR FASHION PORTFOLIO

by Norah Owen

Designed for the March presentation parties at Buckingham Palace, and for many other occasions in this great year, is this dress with matching jacket, in richly-coloured heavy silk, decorated with black braid. The dress has a wide skirt, sleek waist and wide shoulder-straps for informal dancing. A jaunty velvet cap is bobble-trimmed. All from Worth's Boutique, 50, Grosvenor Street.

FOR CORONATION YEAR OCCASIONS

In this Coronation Year there will be a series of occasions both public and private, calling for the particular dress. Whether it be presentation parties, weddings, garden parties, receptions or what you will, there is endless variety from which to choose—we show some to you in these pages, for various ages and in varying styles.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Studio Hanover.

OUR FASHION PORTFOLIO *(continued)*

For Coronation Year Occasions

Apart from the differences in style in dresses this year, which may be stem-slim for the sophisticated woman or full-skirted for the young, there has never been such variety in fabrics—silk, wool, lace, nylon, rayon and even cotton are used for formal dresses, in the widest range of colours and designs that has been seen for some years.

Left : Strictly formal, a suit in grey slubbed silk, braid-edged, with slim skirt and cuffed three-quarter sleeves. A Roter model, about £25, from Finnigan's, Bond Street ; and Brown and Muff, Bradford. The large hat in pink long-pile straw, with black under-brim, sells at approximately 9 gns.

Right : For the very young, but charmingly styled. Grey and green stripes make up this dress in a shimmering material, which is, incidentally, washable. By Lady-in-Colour, about 13 gns., from Peter Jones, London ; and John Walsh, Sheffield. The feather-trimmed straw bonnet costs about 10 gns.

Below : Grey wool-lace, over pink silk, gives this dress, suitable for any age, a quiet elegance. By Matita, price about 26 gns., from Joan Russell, Kensington ; and Fenwick's, Newcastle. The pale green pedal-straw hat, with a large back bow of lavender ribbon, costs approximately 11 gns. All these hats are Condor models, and will soon be available at leading stores.

Below : Slimly sophisticated, in green silk with a geometrical pattern in black. A loose, unlined jacket is worn with a strapless dress, the two being suitable for formal occasions all through the day and evening. By Frederick Starke, about 26 gns., from Rocha, Grafton Street ; and Madame Miller, Bracknell. The amusing little hat in anthracite straw, velvet-trimmed, costs approximately 6 gns.

OUR FASHION PORTFOLIO (*continued*)

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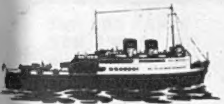

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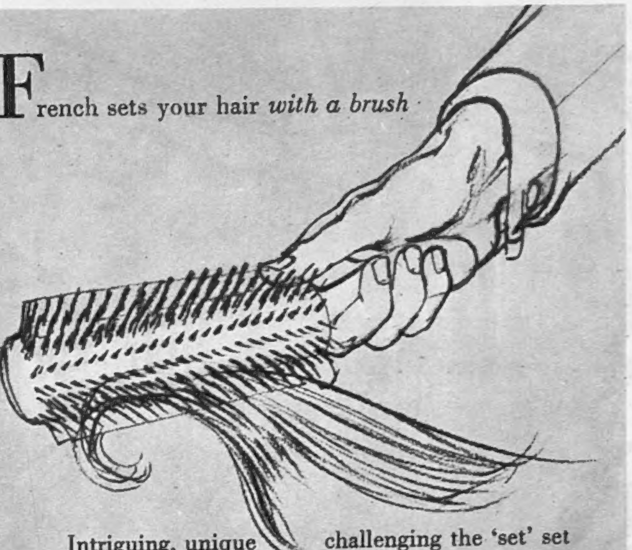

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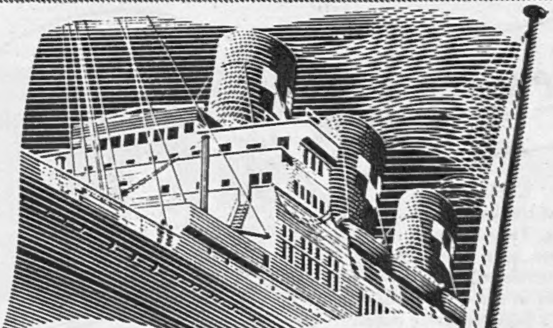

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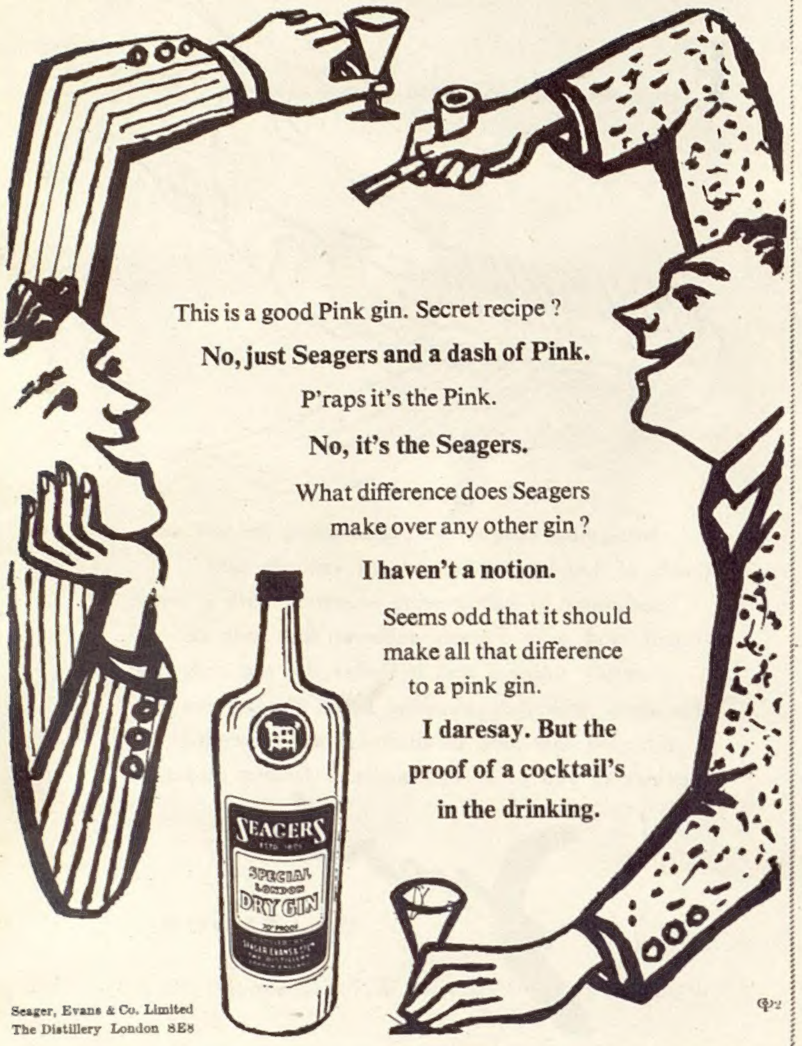

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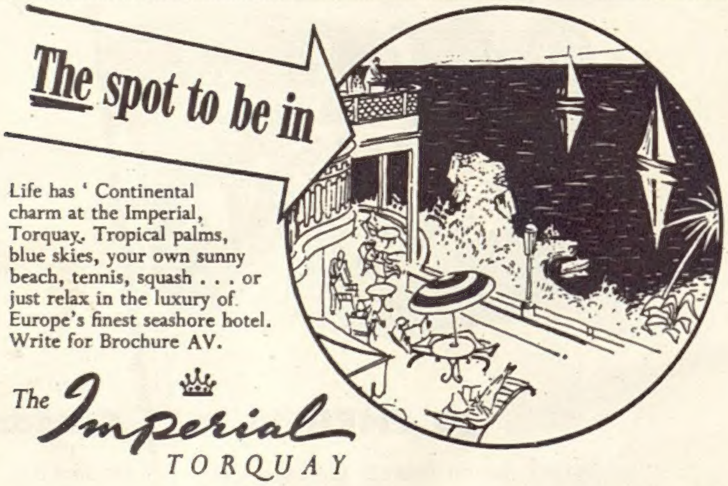

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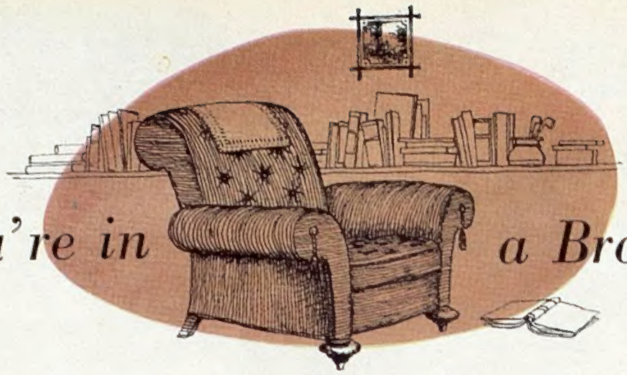

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